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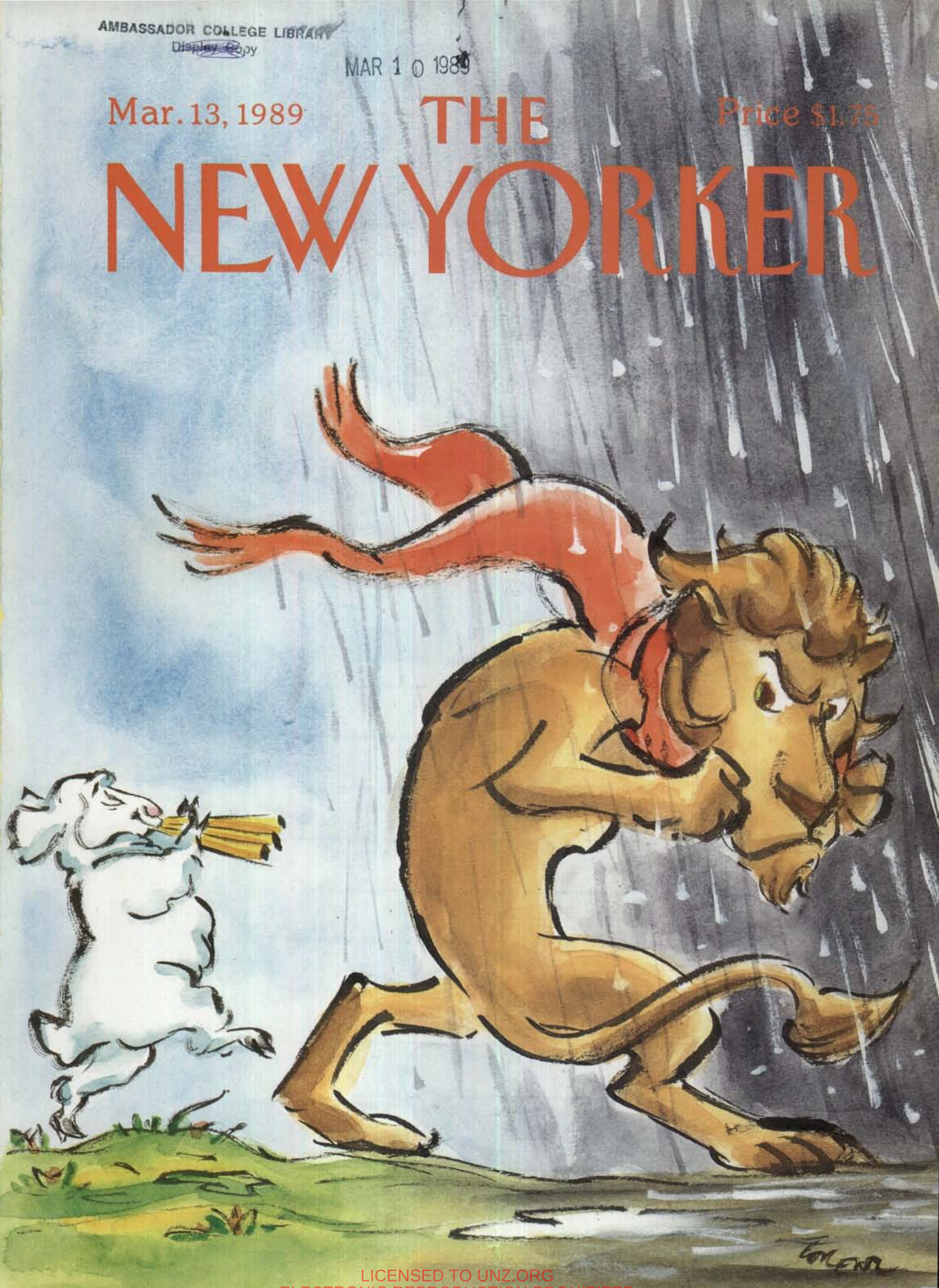

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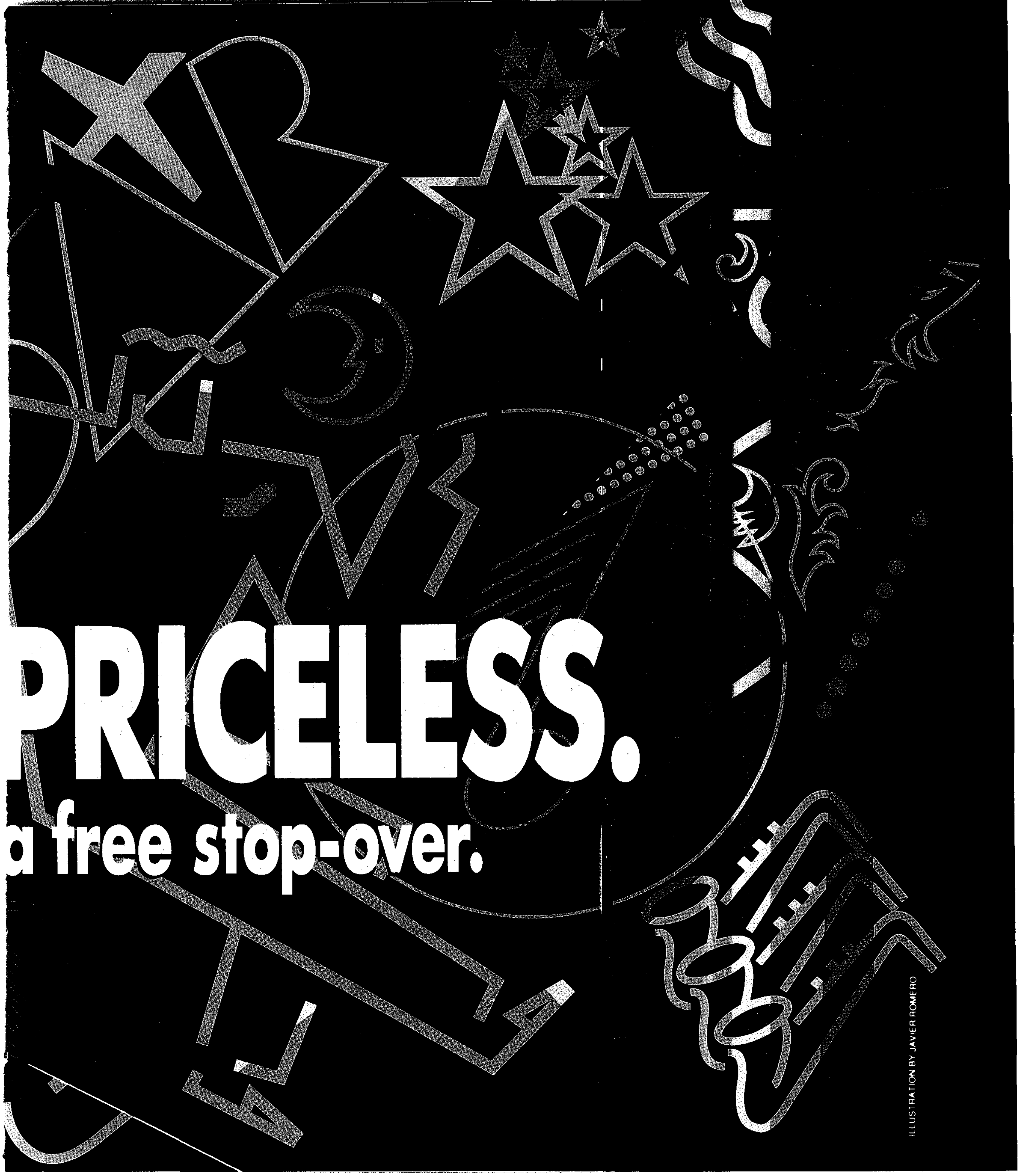

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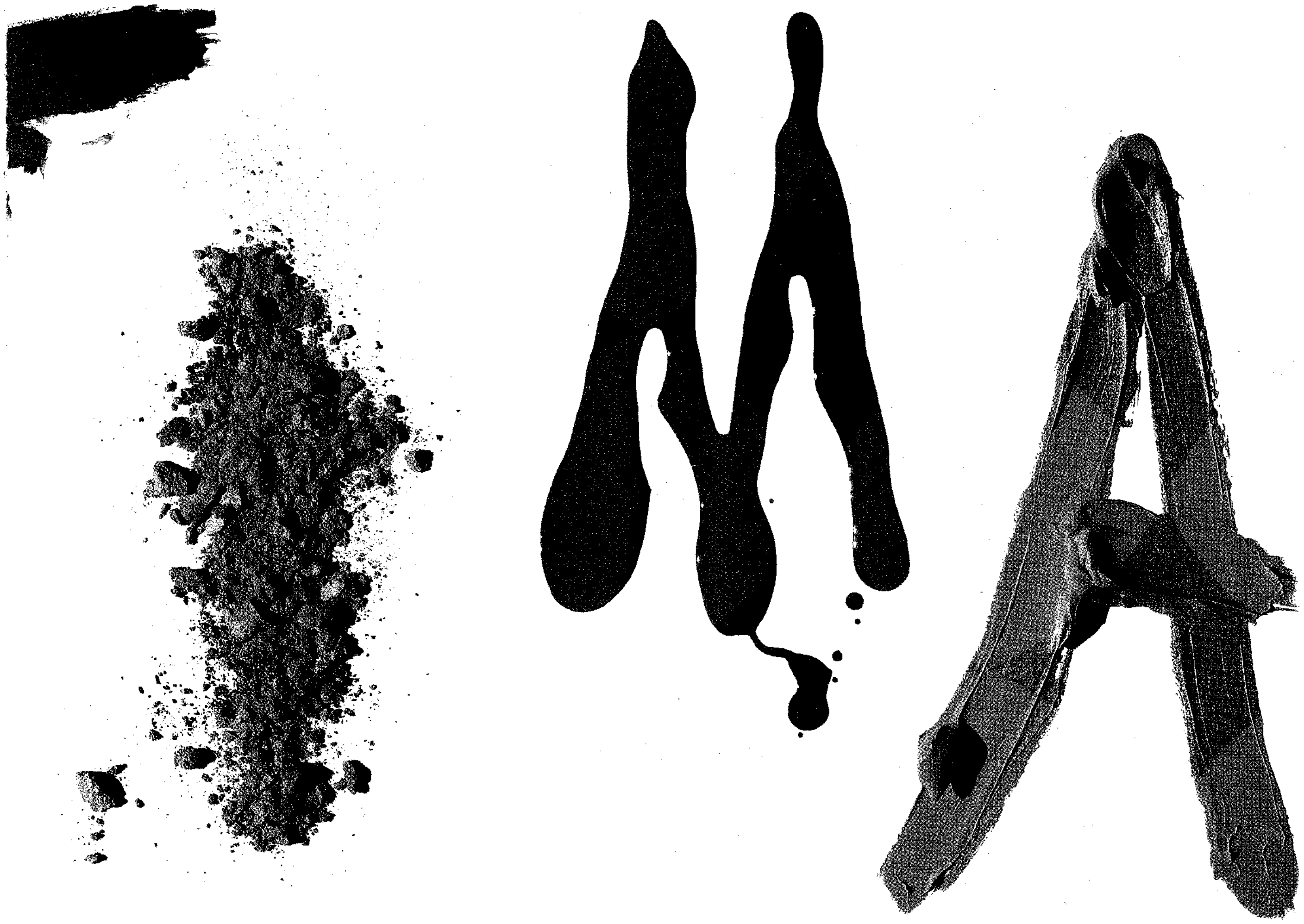

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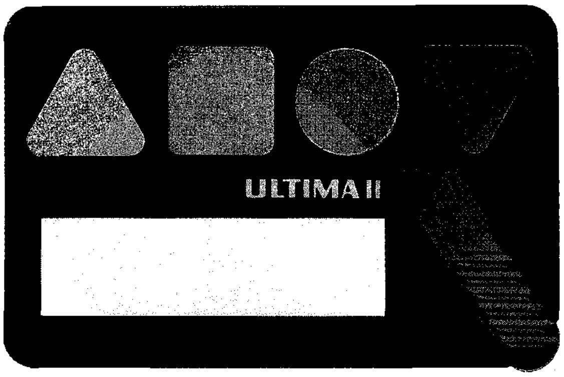

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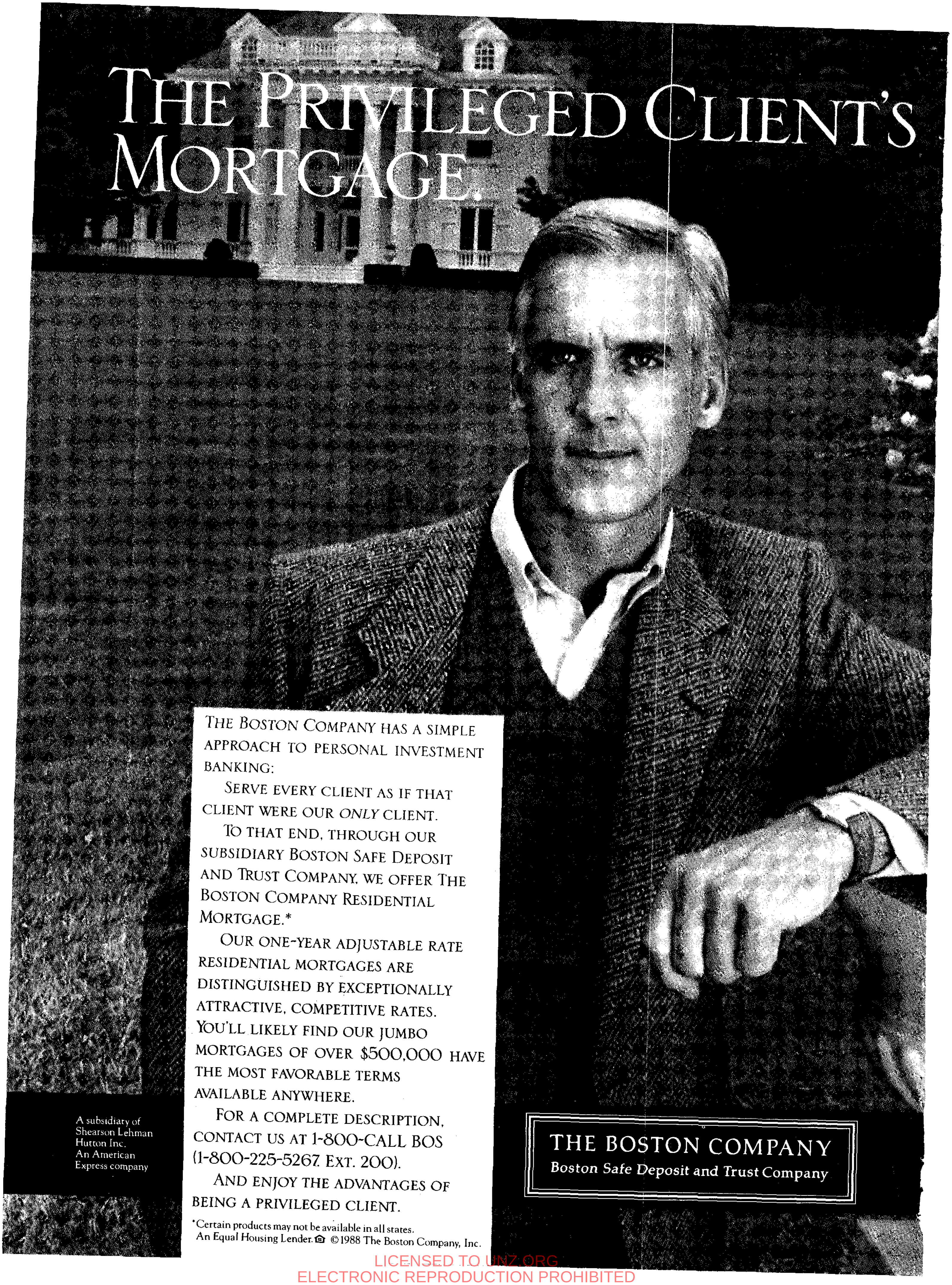

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# THE NEW YORKER

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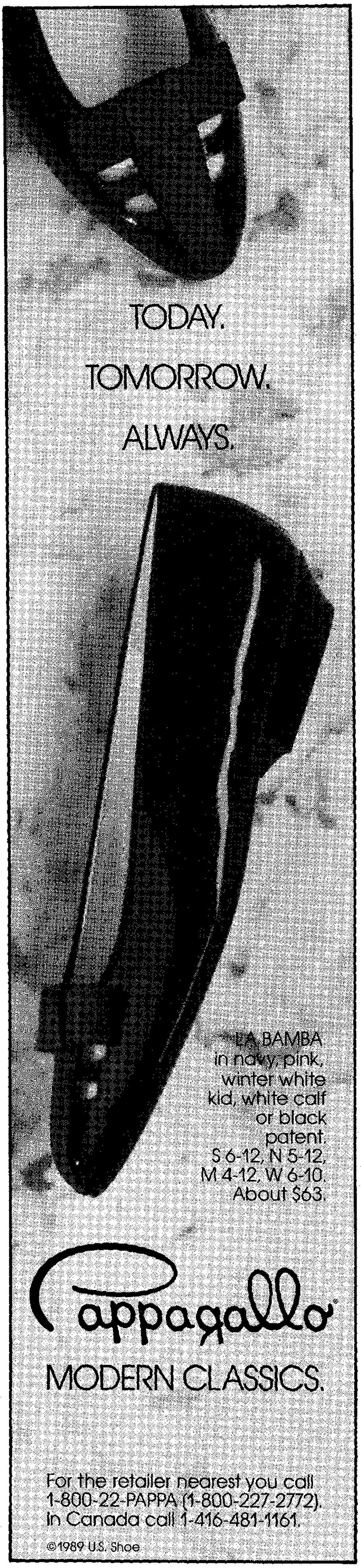
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# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

## THE THEATRE

LATE one night at the end of January, we caught a documentary about the playwright Lorraine Hansberry on Channel 13. Some days earlier (also on Channel 13), we'd caught the American Playhouse presentation of the Roundabout Theatre's recent revival of her play "A Raisin in the Sun," and it had not commanded respect. With its loud, television-soap-style acting, its crude additions and updatings (the revival restored elements of the play that were wisely edited out of the original production), it seemed like so much generic family drama, presenting a world in which values were clear-cut and real conflict nonexistent. We felt we were meant to see the mother as the tyrannical mouthpiece for an outdated social order and the daughter as a straightforward figure of progress and enlightenment, so we found ourself saying, "Ho hum, we've seen this sort of autobiographical revenge play before."

But the documentary suggested that getting back at Mama had been the last thing on Hansberry's mind, and, watching it, we found our "Ho hum" sticking in our throat. What came across was an aspect of Hansberry's experience that one would never have guessed at with only this vulgar production of her play to go on: something about the combination of jealousy and regret with which this quiet, poised, soft-spoken, and elegant-minded young woman regarded the ghetto culture she had left behind her. Looking back on the figures who peopled her childhood on the South Side of Chicago—"kids who wore pegged pants and tight skirts and anklets held up by rubber bands, who did more things and laughed louder and longer than anyone else, and who, above all, were not afraid to fight"—she wrote, "They never understood or believed my envy. And they never will."

### OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

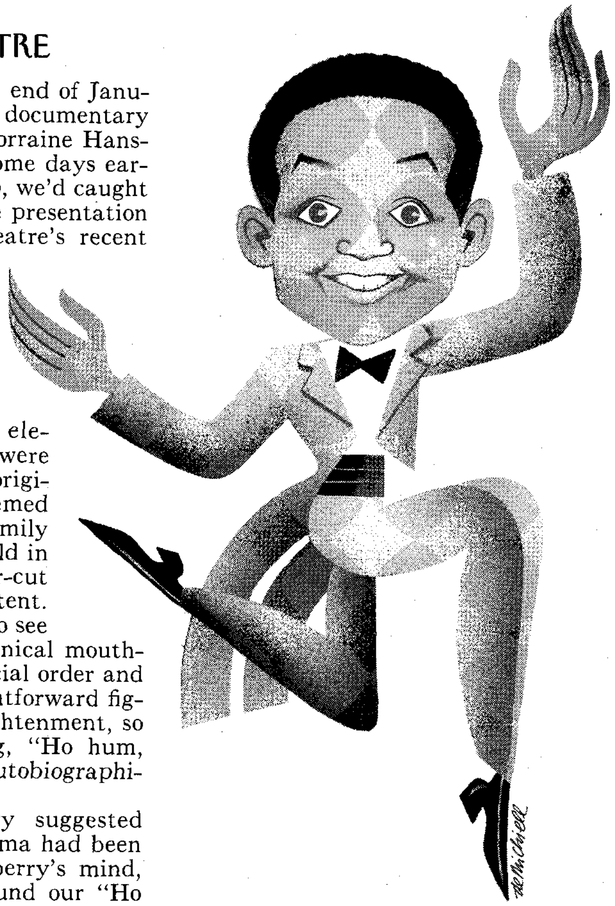
(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for the schedule and ticket availability.)

**Equity Library Theatre**—A Jerome Kern musical comedy from 1917, **LEAVE IT TO JANE.** The book and lyrics were written by Guy Bolton and P. G. Wodehouse. Opens March 9 at 8, and will run through April 2. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. 663-2028.)

**Measure for Measure**—A dark comedy by the Bard, with Len Cariou, Kate Burton, Ethyl Eichelberger, and Jack Weston. Previews through March 8. Opens March 9 at 6:30. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

**The Member of the Wedding**—Carson McCullers' 1950 play, based on her novel of the same name. With Esther Rolle as Berenice Sadie Brown and Amelia Campbell as Frankie Addams. In previews. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

**Metamorphosis**—Mikhail Baryshnikov is Gregor Samsa in Steven Berkoff's one-act adaptation of the Kafka story. Opens March 6 at 7. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)



*Savion Glover in "Black and Blue"*

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**National Theatre of Great Britain**—Presenting two plays in rotating repertory. **MACBETH:** March 14-25, and **APART FROM GEORGE,** by Nick Ward: March 15-24. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 307-7171.)

**Run for Your Wife**—A West End comedy written and directed by, and starring, Ray Cooney. Opens March 7 at 6:30. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 977-9370.)

**What the Butler Saw**—Charles Keating, Carole Shelley, and Joseph Maher in Joe Orton's 1969 play. Directed by John Tillinger, who staged the 1986 revival of "Loot." Preview March 7. Opens March 8 at 8. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

**The Winter's Tale**—Mandy Patinkin, Diane Venora, Alfre Woodard, and Christopher Reeve head the cast in the eighth play in Joe Papp's Shakespeare Marathon. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

### NEW THIS SEASON

**All's Well That Ends Well**—The Pearl Theatre Company's production of Shakespeare's comedy. (Pearl Theatre, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708. Closes March 18.)

**Black and Blue**—An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, Savion Glover, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/6/89, under Dancing.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

**Born Yesterday**—Madeline Kahn's performance as Billie Dawn (the role that made Judy Holliday famous) is the only good thing about this revival of Garson Kanin's 1946 political fable. Ed Asner is entirely inadequate as the scrap-metal tycoon who makes the mistake of hiring a *New Republic* writer to educate his mistress. So, unfortunately, is Daniel Hugh Kelly, who plays the journalist. (2/13/89) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102.)

**Brilliant Traces**—Joan Cusack and Kevin Anderson are most winning in this new play by Cindy Lou Johnson, an offbeat romantic comedy that uses comic surrealism to call comic surrealism itself into question and say something about reality. (2/20/89) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Closes March 12.)

**Cafe Crown**—A revival of the late Hy Kraft's mash note to the Café Royal, a onetime Mecca for Yiddish actors, writers, and intellectuals on the Lower East Side. The play, first produced in 1942, is filled with jokes, most of which pay off. Eli Wallach, as a former star, Anne Jackson, as his wife, and Bob Dishy, as a busy, bossy waiter, play the leading roles in this fine production, directed by Martin Charnin. Santo Loquasto designed the gorgeous setting. (11/14/88) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099.)

**Cantorial**—Anthony Fusco, Lesly Kahn, and Woody Romoff in a play by Ira Levin, the author of "Deathtrap." (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

**The Cocktail Hour**—A dramatist returns to his native city in upstate New York to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more convincing or engaging. Under Jack O'Brien's direction, Nancy Marchand gives a marvellous performance as the hero's mother, and Holland Taylor, Bruce Davison, and Keene Curtis are fine, too. (11/7/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

**Eastern Standard**—An imitation comedy that is as tedious as it is trendy. (11/14/88) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Forbidden Broadway 1989**—A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Roxie Lucas, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath—inspired mimics all. (9/26/88) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

**Gus and Al**—A comedy by Albert Innaurato. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

**A Hatful of Rain**—A new production of the 1955 play by Michael V. Gazzo. (The Actors' Space, 250 W. 54th St., tenth floor. Closes March 12. For information about tickets, call 757-5900.)

**The Heidi Chronicles**—Wendy Wasserstein's new play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, led by Joan Allen. The show has moved to Broadway after a run at Playwrights Horizons. Previews through March 8. The official Broadway opening is March 9 at 6:15. (12/26/88) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**I Could Go On Lip-Synching!**—This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. Certainly this is the strangest show in town. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556.)

**Jerome Robbins' Broadway**—A retrospective of Robbins' non-ballet choreography. (Reviewed in this issue, under Dancing.) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**The Kathy and Mo Show: Parallel Lives**—Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

**Lend Me a Tenor**—A farce by Ken Ludwig. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Light Opera of Manhattan**—Presenting Gilbert and Sullivan's **GONDOLIERS.** (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

**Macbeth**—An in-the-round production of Shakespeare's play, directed by Nicholas Mahon. With Joseph Ziegler in the title role. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. Closes March 11. For information about tickets, call 228-6621.)

**Other People's Money**—A comedy by Jerry Sterner about a Wall Street takeover artist who tries to acquire a small family business. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

**Our Town**—Spalding Gray's monotonous and cynical performance as the Stage Manager almost blights this revival of Thornton Wilder's masterpiece, but there is good work by Roberta Maxwell, Peter Maloney, Frances Conroy, and Eric Stoltz. (12/19/88) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**The Pajama Game**—Judy Kaye, Lenora Nemetz, Richard Muenz, Avery Saltzman, and others singing "Hernando's Hideaway," "Steam Heat," and "7½ Cents" in a revival by the New York City Opera of the 1954 musical. Score and lyrics by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross, and book by George Abbott and Richard Bissell. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

**Rumors**—This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has ever written. It is acted to perfection by Christine Baranski, André Gregory, Mark Nelson, Ron Leibman, Lisa Banes, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (11/28/88) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

**Shirley Valentine**—Pauline Collins gives a funny, beguiling performance as a Liverpool housewife who, feeling herself engulfed by drab domesticity, flies off to Greece, where she finds a temporary lover and lives happily ever after. Miss Collins is the only actor aboard, and she is backed every inch of the way by Willy Russell, who wrote the good play, and by Simon Callow, who directed it. (2/27/89) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Songs of Paradise**—A musical based on the works of the Yiddish poet Itsik Manger. In Yiddish and English; with a book by Miriam Hoffman and Rena Berkowicz Borow, and music by Rosalie Gerut. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

**The Taffetas**—Four talented young women, impersonating a group of singing sisters, perform hits from the fifties. The show, conceived by Rick Lewis as a live broadcast from the early days of television, represents yet another trip down memory lane. Still, for what it is, it's very well done. With Jody Abrahams, Karen Curlee, Melanie Mitchell, and Tia Speros. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292.)

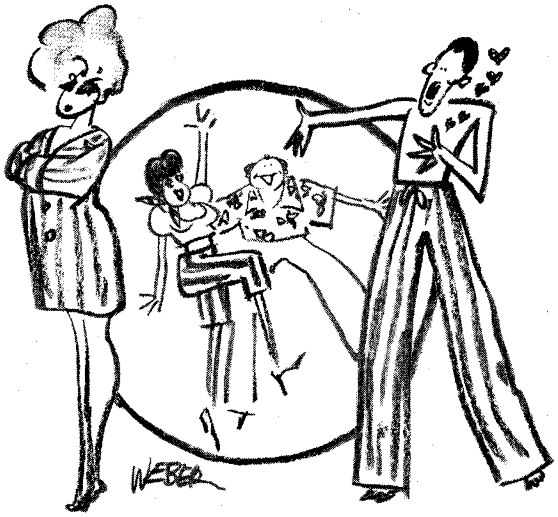
**A Tale of Two Cities**—Everett Quinton's over-the-top one-man version of Dickens' novel has Miss Pross literally hanging from the ceiling. Unfortunately, his performance is more spirited than it is consistently funny. Best is the word "BLOOD" scrawled on the bathroom wall. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

**Together Again for the First Time**—Jo Sullivan and her daughter Emily Loesser in a revue of show tunes, including some by Miss Loesser's father, Frank. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Closes March 26.)

**Triplets in Uniform**—Idiocy at its finest. Jeffrey Essmann's sendup of German Expressionism, Freud, Lillian Hellman, and the cult film "Mädchen in Uniform" represents the best tongue-in-cheek study of adolescent female psychology since "Psycho Beach Party." (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Closes March 18.)

### LONG RUNS

**ANYTHING GOES:** This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Linda Hart, Anthony Heald, Bill McCutcheon, and Howard McGillin, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction, and to the sets and costumes of John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE:** Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue. With Bill Smitrovich and Caroline Aaron. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Closes March 12.) . . . **INTO THE WOODS:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful and funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363.) . . . **M. BUTTERFLY:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with John Rubinstein and B. D. Wong. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The real stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OIL CITY SYMPHONY:** Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Michelle Horman, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny musical. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **SARAFINA!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)



*"The Pajama Game"*

## DANCE

**Place**: The uptown platform of the Broadway local at Lincoln Center. Time: A recent Sunday evening, just before a performance by New York City Ballet at the State Theatre, overhead.

A train pulls in, stops, opens its doors. First, crowds of balletgoers pile out. Then a lone figure leaps from the head car. It's a boy, nine or ten years old, about four feet tall, maybe forty pounds in his street gear and ear-to-ear smile. A bell signals passengers to watch the closing doors. For the boy it's another cue. He bends his knees a bit, and he jumps. A back flip turns him over in the air like an Indian club. He describes a perfect ellipse, then puts his Nikes down on the same patch of cement they covered at take-off. The doors are now only a foot apart. The boy dives forward between them, gets inside the car, and nails the landing. This entire feat took fewer seconds to perform than it has taken you to read about it, and moments less than it took its impromptu audience to recollect their wits and ascend to Balanchine's "Divertimento from 'Le Baiser de la Fée.' "

Life on the edge, bolts from the blue, daredevil timing, and other risky business are staples of street theatre in eighties New York, and they serve as themes of much theatrical dancing that originates here. An elegant example is Trisha Brown's 1983 "Set and Reset," a work of off-hand manners and midair rescues at wing-line. This week, Brown and her company bring most of her recent repertory to City Center (March 14-19), from the 1980 "Opal Loop" to this year's "Astral Convertible." Many of the dances are complex in choreography, sound, and design; they seem to chase their own tails. Costumes and décor are by Robert Rauschenberg, Donald Judd, and Nancy Graves.

**Merce Cunningham Dance Company**—Final performances. March 7 at 8: "RainForest," "Field & Figures" (New York première), and "Grange Eve." . . . ¶ March 8 at 8: "Eleven," "Field & Figures," and "Grange Eve." . . . ¶ March 9 at 8: "Shards," "Native Green," and "Fabrications." . . . ¶ March 10 at 8: "Five Stone Wind" and "Cargo X." . . . ¶ March 11 at 2: "RainForest," "Fabrications," and "Cargo X." . . . ¶ March 11 at 8: "Field & Figures," "Pictures," and "Cargo X." . . . ¶ March 12 at 3: "Field & Figures," "Native Green," and "Pictures." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

**Feld Ballet**—Final performances. March 7 at 8: "Asia," "Kore," "Adieu," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ March 8 at 8: "Petipa Notwithstanding," "Shadow's Breath," "Cortège Parisien," and "Embraced Waltzes." . . . ¶ March 9 at 8: "A Footstep of Air," "Theatre,"

## DANCE—Cont'd

"Echo," and "Love Song Waltzes." . . . ¶ March 10 at 8: "Asia," "Kore," "Adieu," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ March 11 at 8: "The Consort," "Intermezzo No. 1," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ March 12 at 2: "A Footstep of Air," "Theatre," "Echo," and "Love Song Waltzes." . . . ¶ March 12 at 7:30: "Petipa Notwithstanding," "Asia," "Kore," and "Love Song Waltzes." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

**Trisha Brown Company**—Opening performances of a brief engagement. March 14 at 7:30: "Set and Reset," "Opal Loop," and the American première of "Astral Convertible." . . . ¶ March 15 at 8: "Lateral Pass," "Son of Gone Fishin'," and "Newark." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Through March 19.)

**Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane & Co.**—Opening performances of a two-week engagement. March 14 at 7:30: "Soon," "The Gift/No God Logic," "Black Room," and "Chatter." . . . ¶ March 15 at 8: "The Gift/No God Logic," "Forsythia" (première), and "D-Man in the Waters" (première; with the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble). (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through March 26.)

**Douglas Dunn and Dancers**—In "Sky Eye," a new evening-length production. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. March 9-12 at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 674-8112.)

**Tere O'Connor**—With a company of six. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. March 9-12 at 8:30.)

**Music and Dance of the Siberian-Asians**—Ten dancer-musicians from northeastern Siberia performing native works. The dances aren't spectacular, but they are dramatic. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742. March 11-14 at 8.)

## NIGHT LIFE

NOT too long ago, in a Village jazz room, we overheard a young woman tell her companion that she had just heard a certain downtown saxophonist "play the most disgustingly beautiful note for, like, twenty minutes." The note was still ringing in her head. "It was totally great," she said.

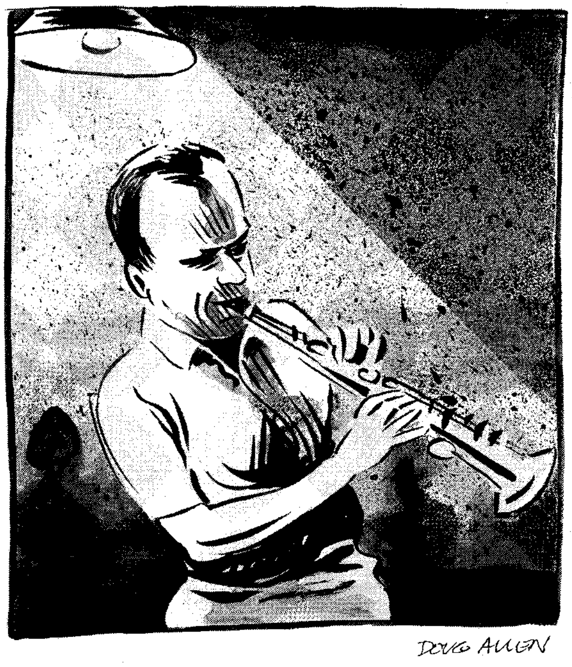
It's a fact that not everybody finds the same notes to be totally great. Which is why, on an average night in New York, you can hear any number of musicians play or sing any number of different notes—shivery blue notes; long strings of sixteenth notes; twangy country notes; tinkly cocktail-piano notes; high gospel notes; shrieking die-yuppie-scum rock notes; mushy love-besotted notes; spiffy Cole Porter notes; swaggering Latin notes; notes that sound like jungle birds made them; computer-programmed notes; cool shoo-be-doo-be notes; ironic post-modern notes; etc. If you happen to go out on March 10th (an average night, scheduled to be lighted by a three-day-old moon), you can hear the dark, mahogany notes of Ron Carter's two-bass, four-cello nonet at Fat Tuesday's; the booming, hot-mama notes of Valerie Wellington, a young Chicago blues singer, at the Village Gate; or the mild California country notes of the Desert Rose Band, led by ex-Byrd Chris Hillman, at the Ritz. If you get lucky, you may get to hear something you didn't plan on hearing—*like a Korean cabdriver tapping* the wheel in time with Tone-Lōc's "Wild Thing" and then singing along with a Brenda K. Starr mashing song.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

**Algonquin Hotel,** 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—In the lobby, people come and go talking of the Forty-fourth Street Chowder and Marching Club, which used to meet here, and of Lerner and Loewe, who knocked out "My Fair Lady" here, and of the cheerful, expansive **margaret whiting,** who casts her voice to the four corners of the Oak Room at nine-fifteen Tuesdays through Thursdays and at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen Fridays and Saturdays. *Dining.*

**Ballroom,** 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A big, soigné cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, in the heart of the fur and fashion-student districts. **yma sumac,** the exotic Peruvian thrush with the big lungs and the grande-dame manner, performs at nine and eleven March 7-11. **little anthony,** who sang "Shimmy Shimmy Ko-Ko Bop" and "Goin' Out of My Head" with the Imperials, begins a two-week visit (without his old group) on March 14.

**Blue Note,** 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—On the back wall of this jazz club there's a neon version of the Manhattan skyline, with a crescent moon and two stars attendant upon it—one of the best examples of inert-gas folk art we know of. March 7-12, pianist **monty alexander's** trio trades sets with a duo composed of crackerjack guitarist **joe pass** and Danish bassist **niels-henning orsted pedersen.** Music from nine. Dining.



*Steve Lacy at Sweet Basil*

**Bottom Line,** 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Music for many kinds of people, including unreconstructed folkies, rock-and-roll fundamentalists, Village bopcats, and persons for whom happiness is an Irish fiddler bowing a jig. **de dannan,** an Irish group that spins out jigs and reels and hornpipes in a way that makes you want to leave your feet, will be here on March 7. Betty, a musical comedy group from Washington, D.C., performs March 10, and Scottish folk-rock singer **al stewart** holds forth March 11-12. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

**Bradley's,** 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A crowded, duskily lit neighborhood bar, where pianists, bassists, and (a new wrinkle) drummers compete for your ear with professional conversationalists. Truth and beauty usually prevail. Pianist **fred hersch** and bassist **michael formanek** hold down the fort March 6-8; March 9-11, they'll be joined by drummer **jeff hirschfield.** First set at nine-forty-five. Dining.

**Carlos I,** 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Pretty much everything about this jazz room is nice: the long rows of tables covered with pink linen, the bijou bandstand, the view from the bar of the bandstand, and the view out the window of Vaux & Withers' gabled Victorian courthouse. **wild bill davis,** a late-Swing pianist and organist who did arranging for Earl Hines and Louis Jordan in the forties and for Duke Ellington in the late sixties, is here with a trio nightly, except Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.

**Fat Tuesday's,** 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through a heavy-duty steel door, through a green Plexiglas door, down a narrow fun-house passageway (mirrors in which you can watch yourself multiply; corrugated-metal siding you can riffle), and down a flight of stairs, you'll find this velvet-and-mirror-walled *boîte.* Bassist **ron carter's** nonet has the floor March 7-12. Mondays are set aside for guitarist **les paul,** who was known as Rhubarb Red back in the twenties and thirties, when he was an itinerant country picker. Music from eight. Dining.

**Fortune Garden Pavilion,** 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Two things not known to be available in the next world—Chinese food and American jazz—can be found here, under a greenhouse roof giving onto a patch of midtown sky. The piano, a Steinway that sits grandly in the middle of the room, is in the hands of **junior mance** through March 12; he'll be attended by bassist **marty rivera. harold nicholas,** the flyweight dancer who used to walk up walls and leap over orchestras with his brother Fayard, tends to keep his feet on the ground nowadays and sing; he has a small, unspectacular voice, but most everything he touches he gets to swing a little. He comes in for a week starting March 14. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

**Jan Wallman's,** 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A cozy room for singers and their followers, cheek by jowl with the Iroquois Hotel. **bart howard,** who wrote "Fly Me to the Moon" and other love songs (a couple of them for Mabel Mercer, whose accompanist he was during the fifties), performs March 6-10; he'll be assisted by Buddy Barnes and K. T. Sullivan. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

**Knitting Factory,** 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor retreat (attained by passing through a downstairs restaurant) that features avant-garde jazz, advanced and unadvanced rock, and miscellaneous weird sounds. It has a slapped-together, homemade look, and, judging by the S.R.O. crowds, it is a thriving enterprise. **elliott sharp,** a downtown composer and multi-instrumentalist, creates clangorous sounds that make you feel as if you were at a construction site and ought to be wearing a hard hat; he and his band, Carbon, play a piece called "Jumpcut" on March 10. Mondays belong to a trio run by free-jazz saxophonist **charles gayle,** and Tuesdays to the **microscopic septet.** Music after nine.

**Lone Star Café,** 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Texas-like in significant respects, though not in the open-spaces-and-clear-sight-lines department, in which it is New York-like. The Holmes Brothers, a local blues outfit, sound off on March 9; **roomful of blues,** an adept jump band from Rhode Island, performs March 10-11. Music after nine. Dining.

**Lone Star Roadhouse,** 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—The midtown branch of the aforementioned honky-tonk. It has more space than the parent joint; it also has more mirrors, more fireplaces (two, on the second floor), more carpeting, more Gibson electric guitars serving as wall ornaments, and at least as many souvenir T-shirts and ball caps. **ruth brown,** the veteran R. & B. singer who was known as Miss Rhythm back in the fifties, spends a night off from "Black and Blue" (in which she sings "If I Can't Sell It, I'll Keep Sittin' on It" and brings down the house) here. March 13 is the night. Music after nine. Dining.

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## NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

**MICHAEL'S PUB,** 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Henry VIII and a unicorn on the walls, well-heeled cats on the banquettes, and **JULIE WILSON** on the bandstand. Miss Wilson, who appears to have survived the "Legs Diamond" debacle, is now concentrating on the proper nouns and risqué verbs of Cole Porter. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

**RAINBOW & STARS,** 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A new, glossy, multilevel maroon-and-silver cabaret, seating about ninety, and located on the north side of the sixty-fifth floor in what used to be a cocktail lounge. The performers, working in a shallow well in the center of the room, do unwitting battle with the bejewelled backdrop of Central Park, Lenox Avenue, the G. W. Bridge, and points north. The **MC GUIRE SISTERS** will be on view March 7-11; **UTE LEMPER,** a twenty-five-year-old German singer with a theatrical voice and a crush on Kurt Weill, begins a two-week stay on March 14. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

**RITZ,** 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Up-to-the-minute rock in a half-century-old ballroom. It's a place for people who don't mind taking their rock standing up; the few seats that exist—in the balcony—are reserved for the usual suspects. On March 10, there's a country-music show, with the **DESERT ROSE BAND** and Kentucky girl **PATTY LOVELESS;** on March 12, reggae crooner **GREGORY ISAACS** holds forth. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

**SOUNDS OF BRAZIL,** 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A musical melting pot: samba bands, African pop bands, reggae people, calypsonians, and salsa ensembles all pass through this former luncheonette. The lineup: March 7, Latin-jazz pianist **PAPO LUCCA** and his big band; March 9-10, Brazilian singer Margareth Menezes; and March 14-15, reggae singers **JUDY MOWATT** and **SISTER CAROL.** Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

**SPEAKEASY,** 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—Outside, on the boulevards of Greenwich Village, heedless local youths and tourists from New Jersey make mad music; inside, dulcimers are hammered, fiddles are fiddled, folk songs are sung, and Professor Irwin Corey sometimes pops his head in to explain what a light bulb is (a thing that sucks up darkness until it goes out). **ROSALIE SORRELS,** a wise and funny folksinger and storyteller from Boise, Idaho, has the floor March 9. Music from about eight-thirty. Dining.

**SWEET BASIL,** 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—The Danish Radio Big Band will be in this Village temple of jazz (pressed-tin ceiling, grainy black-and-white photos of your favorite demigods, knee-to-knee seating) March 6-8. **SUN RA,** the septuagenarian pianist and bandleader who travels the world decked out in a shaman's flowing robes and kooky hats, brings in his faithful Arkestra for four nights starting March 9. **STEVE LACY,** a thoroughly modern master of the soprano saxophone who left this country for Europe twenty years ago and rarely comes back, arrives with his sextet on March 14. Shows from ten. Dining.

**VILLAGE GATE,** 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—A three-ring circus. The ringmaster, a bearded Village elder named Art D'Lugoff, sometimes employs a barker to steer traffic to his multiple entertainments. In the basement, on Mondays after nine, salsa bands play for dancing and listening. **VALERIE WELLINGTON,** a young Chicago blues singer with a mighty voice and an electric smile, performs March 10-11. Back upstairs, in the Terrace Bar, where business and conversation are often at boom level, pianist **HERMAN FOSTER** is on duty from ten Tuesdays through Sundays.

**VILLAGE VANGUARD,** 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—One of the few places below the surface of New York that deserve landmark status. It's also one of the few places anywhere that have a notable (if that's the right word) light fixture—one that Charles Mingus K.O.'d while trying to reason with the proprietor, and that the proprietor, a preservationist as well as a businessman, decided to leave in Mingus-ized condition. **JOHN HANDY,** a Texas-born saxophonist who worked with Mingus in the sixties, leads a seven-piece group (featuring three female violinists, who double as vocalists) March 7-12. On March 14, drummer **ED THIGPEN,** a former Oscar Peterson sideman who has lived in Denmark since 1972, brings in a band that sports an all-New Orleans front line of **BRANFORD MARSALIS** (saxophone) and **TERENCE BLANCHARD** (trumpet). Music after ten.

**ZANZIBAR & GRILL,** 550 Third Ave., at 36th St. (779-0606)—Outside, the jungle that is New York throbs in its old heavy-handed way; inside, the ceiling fans turn slowly, the palm trees susurrate tropically, the jukebox plays the Mills Brothers and Xavier Cugat, and the customer entertains the usual fevered thoughts about going South, where he can do a little shelling and shuffleboarding. Jazz people are on the premises nightly from about nine. Cornettist **WARREN VACHÉ** plays with the house band on March 8; **TAL FARLOW,** one of the best of the bop-school guitarists, performs March 14-15.

## EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

ON March 11th, La Toya Jackson will be performing at the Spectrum, in Bay Ridge. The Spectrum is located at the site of the former 2001 discothèque, where Tony Manero's "Saturday Night Fever" broke across the lit-from-below dance floor. Ten years later, the Spectrum is a gay club. The floor still flashes, and there's still plenty of body heat, even on Jacksonless Saturday nights, so you'll have to be in line way before midnight if you want to see La Toya.

Why is La Toya appearing at a disco in Brooklyn? She doesn't need the work. (She recently purchased a two-and-a-half-million-dollar condominium in Manhattan.) She doesn't need the publicity. (Her family and her pet snake provide that.) She certainly doesn't need any more exposure. La Toya is there because a disco audience is unlike any other. It's a psyched assemblage, with barely an arms-folded show-me-something-I-haven't-seen-before attitude in the bunch. People pay a nominal entrance fee, and they're halfway to getting their money's worth before the performer comes on. Since they're already standing, why not give an ovation? Discos have always attracted Broadway performers like Patti LuPone and Phyllis Hyman, because this atmosphere guarantees the whoops and whistles that only occasionally emanate from theatre audiences. Loleatta Holloway, the Weather Girls, and other aging and expanding disco divas are cheered for lip-synching songs much older than the Scotch being served—and momentarily forget they currently have no record label. And recording artists like Paula Abdul and New Kids on the Block can't yet fill the Garden, but for one night at the Palladium they're a smash. La Toya has a brand-new album that's going nowhere slowly, but an image that's double platinum. For those who want to catch her act but feel a trip across the river is a journey into uncharted territory, relax—she's going to leave the snake at home.

## PIE IN THE SKYLINE

*The place is shaped like a slice of pizza, and it's not much bigger, but there's nothing small about the visions on view at Storefront for Art & Architecture (97 Kenmare St., near Lafayette). Architectural exhibitions at Storefront, which operates on a shoestring (and often a frayed one at that), have been putting museums to shame for years. Currently on view is the work of Michael Webb, a founder of the English Archigram group and creator of a mercifully forgotten style known, on account of its formal resemblance to entrails, as Bowellism. The show includes drawings for Webb's "Sin Palace" (1962), one of the first projects to introduce the element of intellectualized play which has since become so prominent in contemporary architecture and design. Webb will be on hand to speak about his work on Thursday, March 9, at 7* P.M.

## IN ANOTHER CATEGORY— PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

**"THE SEVEN YEAR VACATION"**—Edgar Oliver's one-man play in which a boy travelling East for his summer vacation stops off at a cemetery in Richmond and discovers that he is a vampire. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. March 6 and 13 at 9.)

**P.S. 122**—March 9-12 at 9:30: Jim Turner as six mythical American figures. Randee of the Redwoods, a burned-out Californian prone to flashbacks, and Grudge Hanson, a beat poet, are among them. . . . ¶ March 10-12 at 9: DanceNoise, two women talking and dancing to hits from the seventies. The performance includes a pas de trois with a man in a lion suit. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

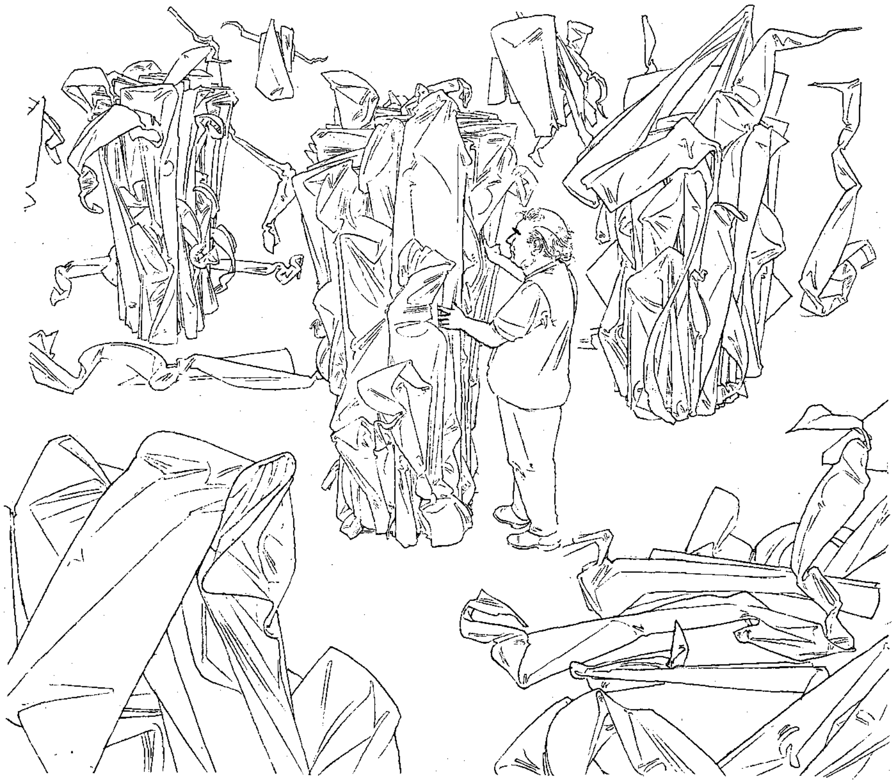
## RHAPSODIES AND BLUES

*It's time to take a good long look at Johnny Cash's boots. They can be found in a display case at the public library at Lincoln Center, as part of an exhibition celebrating ASCAP's seventy-fifth year. Along with the boots, you'll find Stevie Wonder's harmonica and Louis Armstrong's trumpet, as well as the answers to many crucial songwriter-related questions. Where, for example, did Otto Harbach write the words to "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes"? (In bed.) What kind of typewriter did Irving Caesar use to tap out "Tea for Two"? (An Underwood.) While a vintage neon jukebox spins out ASCAP hits, you can pore over player-piano rolls, sheet music, and the Grammys awarded to such wedding-band standards as "Moon River" and "Flashdance." The real highlight of this show, however, is a video clip of Irving Berlin—a man who could sing and smile at the same time. He's wearing Army fatigues and belting out "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" with a sort of showman's breaststroke. You'll leave the library whistling Berlin and imagining Johnny Cash singing in his socks.*

# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

## ART

John Chamberlain has always been one of the great, bighearted bad boys of contemporary art, and one of the most misunderstood of artists. Though he has worked in a wide and imaginative assortment of materials, including foam rubber, he was known for years as the guy who made things out of smashed car parts—perhaps the art joke of choice among philistines. Even those more kindly disposed often imagined that his crushed-steel beauties were radically alienated, pessimistic, or, at the very least, existential. What they are is full of life, and also, in many ways, traditional. His new works, such as "Sprayed Myopia," "Tomato Poodle," "Catholic Aspirin," and "F*****g Asterisks," at the Pace Gallery through March 25th, are positively statuesque, and may even remind some viewers of Rodin's "Burghers of Calais" minus the bathos. Chamberlain, in fact, is looking more baroque and more upbeat than ever. These big, hulking sculptures are as luminous as porcelain and appear to be standing on their toes.



*John Chamberlain*

David Johnson

### MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

**Metropolitan Museum,** Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A show of Sienese Renaissance paintings and manuscript illuminations. Through March 19. . . . ¶ All the Ingres works in the collection (ten paintings, twenty-two drawings, and seven prints) have been put on view *together. The Met's holdings tend to reflect* this great neoclassical artist's most conservative side. Exceptions include the portrait of the "Princesse de Broglie" (1851) and one small sheet of reclining male nudes. Through March 19. . . . ¶ Photographs from William Henry Fox Talbot's "Pencil of Nature." (See Photography, below.) Through April 9. . . . ¶ "The Masterworks" of Frederick Remington—unworthy of serious attention by a major art museum. Through April 16. . . . ¶ The Costume Institute is exhibiting eighty-five outfits from the Victorian era. Through April 16. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

**Museum of Modern Art,** 11 W. 53rd St.—The Andy Warhol retrospective. Through May 2. A complementary show is at Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, 31 Mercer St. . . . ¶ A show of architectural design—models, drawings, and photographs of buildings—by Emilio Ambasz and Steven Holl. Through April 4. . . . ¶ Walker Evans' works. (See Photography.) Through April 11. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

**Guggenheim Museum,** Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Refigured Painting: The German Image": A haphazard onslaught of Expressionism which attempts to make sense of German painting today but desperately needs editing in some areas and amplification in others. Artists like Lüpertz look better than ever here, while important figures like Richter and Polke look *trivial. Worth a visit if only to see the* majestic Wright building filled with the aggressive air of an art fair. Through April 23. (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

**Whitney Museum of American Art,** Madison Ave. at 75th St.—For all his inventiveness and creativity, Frederick Kiesler has remained relatively obscure since his death in 1965. This eye-opening retrospective is a chance to take a fresh look at his work, including a reconstruction of the Surrealist room in Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century gallery. Through April 16. . . . ¶ A show of American folk art from the center in Williamsburg, Virginia, that is named for Abby Aldrich Rockefeller. The landmark collection, *started in the twenties, identified* and brought to public attention such painters (all represented here) as Ammi Phillips, Erastus Salisbury Field, and John Brewster, Jr. Also, carvings, furniture, textiles, and pottery. Through April 2. . . . ¶ A selection of sculptures from the sixties by Yoko Ono, with new bronze casts beside the originals. Concurrently, films and videos by Ono are on view on the second floor. (See Film Libraries, below, for schedule.) Through April 16. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

**Brooklyn Museum,** Eastern Parkway—Sculptures and drawings by four outstanding American post-minimalists: Joel Fisher, Mel Kendrick, Robert Lobe, and John Newman. What they have in common is a feeling for inchoate form—shapes that look like evolutionary glitches and suggest old-fashioned views of the future. Through May 15. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

**American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters,** Broadway at 155th St.—A hundred paintings and sculptures by twenty-nine artists who have been nominated for Academy-Institute art awards. Among the candidates are Lisa Lawley, Rackstraw Downes, and Stephen De Staebler. Through March 25. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

**American Craft Museum,** 40 W. 53rd St.—Finnish art objects made of wood; a loan show from Helsinki's Museum of Applied Arts. *Through April 23. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8,* with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

**Bronx Museum of the Arts,** 1040 Grand Concourse—"Traditions and Transformations: Contemporary Afro-American Sculpture" is a noble and problematic attempt to demonstrate the vitality of black artists working within the mainstream. For example, veteran sculptor Martin Puryear is not shown to best advantage. But Maren Hassinger is well represented by an alley of wavy, partially unravelled cables; Alison Saar by folk-art-inspired pieces with spooky ritualistic touches; and Melvin Edwards by "lynch fragments": they look at first like tired welded-metal sculptures but are in fact chilling assemblages of locks, spikes, and chains. Through *May 27. . . . ¶ A concurrent display of sculp*tures by Tyrone Mitchell demonstrates a love of wood—sanded and stained, or left raw. He has a surrealist bent, but many of the forms are hokey. Through April 13. (Weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

**Grolier Club,** 47 E. 60th St.—Intaglio prints by American landscape painters who learned how to etch plates and print them at the New York Etching Club in the eighteen-eighties. Among the artists who found a love for the medium were William Merritt Chase, Frank Duveneck, and Mary Nimmo Moran. Through April 1. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

**Jewish Museum,** Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit examining the ways in which artists have found inspiration in the golem legend. Through April 2. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

**Morgan Library,** 29 E. 36th St.—A show of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century drawings from Haarlem's Teyler Museum focusses attention on the contrasting purposes of Northern and Southern European draftsmanship. Through April 30. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

**Museum of the City of New York,** Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Celebrating George," a show reflecting New Yorkers' changing attitudes toward President Washington. The memora*bilia include a piece of jewelry purportedly* containing a lock of Washington's hair. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

**National Academy of Design,** Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—More than a hundred oils, watercolors, prints, drawings, and sculptures by National Academy artist-members, thirty-three of whom were awarded prizes. Through March 26. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

**The New Museum,** 583 Broadway—Robert Colescott is one of the few black artists to take on the mainstream (white) art world successfully. His parodies of art history, in which he reinterprets landmark paintings by substituting black figures for white ones, are acerbic and entertaining attacks on racism and sexism. While hardly a "retrospective" (Colescott was forty-five when he arrived at his signature style), this is a powerful show. Don't miss his version of a violent de Kooning woman, her face replaced with Aunt Jemima's. Through April 16. The Phyllis Kind gallery, 136 Greene St., has a complementary show, ending March 9. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

**New York Public Library,** Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—The role of the newly free press in the French Revolution is explored in an exhibit of pamphlets, books, broadsides, playing cards, and an eighteenth-century printing press, along with a working press of similar design manned (from 2 to 3 Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays) by printers turning out bilingual copies of "The Declaration of the Rights of Man." Through April 29. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.)

## GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

**Jean Hélion** (1904-87)—A full sampling of watercolors from the thirties which traces the unsung Hélion's transition from Constructivism to Surrealism. Through April 1. (Rachel Adler, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

**Jasper Johns**—An immaculate historical view of all but one of Johns' elusive map paintings. Through March 25. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

**Joan Miró** (1893-1983)—A pleasant, informal assortment of drawings, paintings, sculptures, and ceramics by this master of austere whimsy. Through March 25. (Perls, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

**Ignacio Zuloaga** (1870-1945)—John Singer Sargent admired this Spanish artist, and this show includes a number of charming portraits of proper Bostonians dressed up as *majas* out of Goya. Zuloaga was everything Picasso did not want to be. Through April 28. (Spanish Institute, 684 Park Ave., at 68th St. Open Mondays.)

**"Mayakovsky and the Book"**—This display of books by the great Russian Futurist poet Mayakovsky includes some of the century's most brilliant experiments with typography—designed in the teens and twenties by Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Stepanova, and many others—as well as pamphlets for the proletariat. Through March 26. (MJS Books & Graphics, 9 E. 82nd St. Opens at noon.)

**"The Persistence of Painting"**—The second in a series of four exhibitions on abstraction. Much of it looks good, especially the surfaces of Nancy Haynes, the compositional simplicity of Harvey Quaytman, and the organic richness of Bill Jensen. Through March 10. (Hunter College Art Gallery, Lexington Ave. at 68th St. Opens at 1.)

**Group Shows**—At the **AMERICAS SOCIETY,** Park Ave. at 68th St.: "New Image Painting: Argentina in the Eighties" offers works by Rafael Bueno, Alfredo Prior, and Guillermo Kuitca. All three have a rather insipid, brushy and breathy touch, but Kuitca's more lurid cast of mind inhibits sleep. Through April 16. (Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.) . . . **HIRSCHL & ADLER MODERN,** 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.: Titled "Repetition," sometimes this show looks as if anybody who ever did anything twice, in any medium, is included. However, it does include some first-rate sixties pieces by Beuys, Polke, and Warhol, and good recent work by artists as disparate as Donald Baechler, Joe Zucker, and the devilish Wolfgang Staehle. Through March 25. (Open Mondays.) . . . **SCULPTURE CENTER,** 167 E. 69th St.: Works by female sculptors who are reconsidering traditional representations of the female form; Alison Saar, Mary Ann Unger, and Nancy Fried are among them. Through March 25.

**Short List—FRITZ BULTMAN,** Schlesinger, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St., open Mondays (through March 31); **SONIA DELAUNAY,** Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (through April 15); **ROBERT OHNIGIAN,** Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St. (through April 8).

## GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

**Ronald Bladen** (1918-88)—Before he made his significant contribution to postwar sculpture, Bladen was an accomplished, if somewhat derivative, painter. These, his last paintings, date from the late fifties, and look much like the work of Al Held, his friend and, at the time, his studio-mate. Bladen's appealing departure here is fistfuls of crusty paint. Through March 11. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

**Robert Kushner**—Even with his wonderfully bizarre sense of color and uncanny ability to make the garish seem regal, there's a sadness and a sense of frustration to these paintings of large flowers. Through March 11. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

**Terence La Noue**—Large monotypes with collage. This is the kind of chromatically vivid, dynamically orchestrated abstraction that is so often irresistible to a generation of modern poets. Though it has bravado, La Noue's work is also cold. Through March 18. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

**Hermann Nitsch**—Large paint- and blood-splattered canvases, ritual tables, and liturgical vestments from performances directed by this artist, in which sheep were disembowelled. Through March 11. (Luhring Augustine, 41 E. 57th St.)

**Antoni Tàpies**—Recent work by the most accomplished of Spain's postwar artists. Using a characteristic palette of browns, grays, and blacks, Tàpies gouges archetypal images directly into thick paint cracked like old asphalt or into smooth surfaces coated with marble dust. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St., through March 18; and 112 Greene St., through March 11.)

**Abraham Walkowitz** (1878-1965)—After visiting Paris in 1906, Walkowitz developed his own Cubo-Futurist style to express his evident delight in the skyscraper grandeur of New York. The drawings and watercolors in this enchanting exhibition have a dynamic and symphonic quality. Also on view are obsessive watercolors of a chunky Isadora Duncan in every liberating pose imaginable. Through March 25. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

**Sidney Janis 40th Anniversary Exhibition**—An exquisite installation of works by Mondrian, Léger, Giacometti, and Arp which pays tribute to the master art dealer Sidney Janis, who exhibited each of them in decades past. Through March 11. (110 W. 57th St.)

**Short List—ISABEL BISHOP,** Midtown, 11 E. 57th St. (through March 31); **LARRY BROWN,** Lamagna, 50 W. 57th St. (through March 18); **JOHN CHAMBERLAIN,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through March 25); **JEDD GARET,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through March 25); **AL HELD,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through March 25); **WOLF KAHN AND REBECCA WELZ,** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through April 1); **MATTA,** Herstand, 24 W. 57th St., open Mondays (through March 25); **DARRAGH PARK,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through March 25); **CAROLYN PLOCHMANN,** Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St. (through March 25); **PETER SAUL,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through April 29); **KIMBER SMITH,** Ross, 50 W. 57th St. (through April 8).

## GALLERIES—SoHo

**Joseph Amar**—An ambitious exhibition of mixed-media sculptures and reliefs by an intelligent young artist with a strong feel for materials, who, right now, is busy attending to large sophistic questions. In short, he is retreading the work of others. The others include, most obviously, Jasper Johns, Joseph Beuys, and Jannis Kounellis. This show inaugurates the Cutler gallery's big new space. Through March 11. (593 Broadway.)

**Donald Baechler**—There is an adolescent power to these monstrously enlarged fake children's paintings of kids juggling vegetables or blowing bubbles. Through March 25. (Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St.) . . . ¶ A display of drawings of groups of tulips, faces, and socks. Through March 23. (Kasmin, 580 Broadway.)

**Louisa Chase**—Gashes in smudged white paint, which reveal black beneath, and artfully balanced red, yellow, and blue rectangles reside on the same canvas—an odd cohabitation that works. Through March 11. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

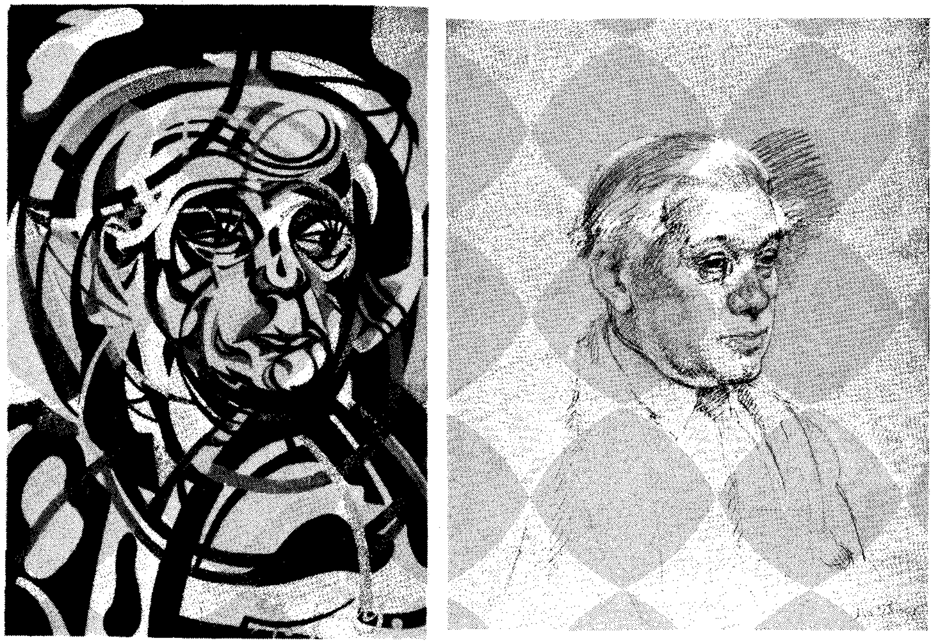
**Robert Colescott**—New paintings. Through March 9. (Kind, 136 Greene St. A larger show is at The New Museum.)

**Eric de la Cova**—Mixed-media sculptures that look as if they have just been unearthed and plunked on the floor, dirt and all. Through March 25. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

**Richard DeVore**—The ceramics field took a wrong turn when it began to favor pedestal sculptures over functional objects. This craftsman's thin-walled vessels, with their beautiful surfaces and delicate edges, could add up to something wonderful, if they tried less to be art. Through March 18. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

**Roger Essley / Andrea Way**—Pristine drawings of what look like collaged snapshots of Hallmarkiana. / Fussy drawings with patterns of scratchy circles and lines. Through March 25. (Fendrick, 568 Broadway, entrance on Prince St.)

**Mary Grigoriadis**—A modest, engaging fifteen-year retrospective of work, paintings and pas-



*Abraham Walkowitz by Walter Quirt and by Isabel Bishop* tels, involving patterned abstraction and a kind of cooled-out Fauvism. Through March 11. (A.I.R., 63 Crosby St.)

**Michael Loew** (1907-85)—Academic modernism is not in short supply this month. Loew was an agreeable minor master of a neoplastic painting style that owes a lot to Mondrian but that doesn't have much bite. Through March 11. (Pearl, 420 West Broadway.)

**H. James Merrell**—An ostentatiously strong smell of oil paint in a gallery puts some in a reverential mood and makes others suspicious. Merrell rakes the viscous stuff sideways in layers across his two-plane canvases, producing lush colors—mostly red, orange, purple, and brown—along with the sense that he is after the Greenbergian grail. Through March 18. (Penine Hart, 568 Broadway.)

**Dennis Oppenheim**—After a protracted period of unevenness, Oppenheim is back, with work more delightfully demented than ever. An endless column of green wine bottles with happy faces etched into them rises in the Plumb gallery; two pairs of horses made of plastic yellow balls and wired to spin around look like a geneticist's piñata; and a group of deer have gentle flames at the tips of their antlers. Through March 11. (81 Greene St.)

**Blinky Palermo** (1943-77)—Prints from the early seventies. Palermo, a rebel with an anti-authoritarian cause, worked out many of his ideas about emotional minimalism and nonrational systems in his prints. This elegant show is an excellent, if modest, introduction for those unfamiliar with his work. Through March 15. (Newburg, 580 Broadway.)

**Steven Parrino**—A fast take is all that is necessary to appreciate these self-referential paintings, each in a different color of the rainbow. Some have an ellipse, a rectangle, or circles cut out of them; others are literally slipping off their stretchers. Through March 18. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

**David Rabinowitch**—Barbara Flynn's new gallery was designed to accommodate the sculpture on view: five large sets of concentric rings carved into the walls by a veteran minimalist. The result is a tall, echoing chamber. Through April 29. (Flynn, 113 Crosby St.)

**Martha Rosler**—"Home Front" is the first of three installations to explore and expose the complex history and dire problems of housing in New York City. It includes a reconstitution of a Chinatown tenement kitchen-with-tub, a wide variety of polemical art works by different artists, and elaborate documentation. Through March 14. (Dia Art Foundation, 77 Wooster St. Opens at noon.)

**Margo Sawyer**—Three new sculptures made of welded steel, copper, brass, and silk, including an unusual low-hanging ceiling piece, in this artist's promising first solo show in New York. These gruff-looking metal armatures might be baubles for Vulcan. Through March 18. (Toll, 146 Greene St. Sawyer's sculpture can also be seen at P.S. 1 until March 12, and at Socrates Sculpture Park, in Long Island City, through the end of March.)

**Jeff Starr**—Weird realistic paintings of a laborer inspecting a dollar bill and of a fat boy mesmerized by two warring toy soldiers. Through March 17. (Leonard Warehouse, 419 Broome St. Opens at 1.)

**Ernest T.**—This French artist creates endless variations on a pattern painting of interlocking "T"s, reminiscent of designer bags. Some paintings he hangs on the wall, others he incorporates into blown-up cartoons, and still others he arranges in and around a fitted case that looks as if it's being unpacked. Through March 9. (Brown, 560 Broadway.)

**Cy Twombly**—Twelve paintings, one drawing, and two painted wood sculptures, all from 1951 and 1953, some from the collection of Robert Rauschenberg. This is restrained, assured work for a young artist, but then composure has always been Twombly's cardinal sign. The paint used is house paint, and the sculptures are especially guileless. Through March 18. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

**Emilio Vedova**—The first solo exhibition in New York for this important Italian artist (who turns seventy this year) includes paintings from 1982 to 1988. Most are very large and tondo-shaped. Several are freestanding and

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painted on both sides in the artist's usual expressionistic grisaille. Through April 1. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

**Andy Warhol** (1930-87)—An interesting, admittedly botched installation by Warhol from the early seventies, involving plastic daisies and an awkward water-dripping apparatus that never produced the desired optical effect. Also, miscellaneous sculptural objects, such as a cement-filled Whitman Sampler. . . . ¶ Christopher Makos's photographs of Warhol. (See Photography.) Through March 18. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St. For even more Warhol, a retrospective can currently be seen at the Museum of Modern Art.)

**Patrick Weidmann**—A mute and lifeless display of composite art works made of frames, doorknobs, mirrors, frieze paintings, and black-and-white photographs, fastidiously arranged in rectangular groupings. Through March 11. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

**Helen Miranda Wilson**—Sensitive, precise, sky-filled landscapes, hung annoyingly high on the Sorkin gallery walls. Through April 1. (596 Broadway.)

**Short List**—**JAMES LEE BYARS,** Boone, 417 West Broadway (through March 25); **GEORGE DUDDING,** Bietzel, 113 Greene St. (through March 25); **JANE HAMMOND,** Exit Art, 578 Broadway (through March 25); **RICHARD KALINA,** McDonald, 560 Broadway (through April 1); **VINCENT LONGO,** Condeso-Lawler, 76 Greene St. (through March 11); **ROMAN OPALKA,** Weber, 142 Greene St. (through March 25); **JOSEPH RAFFAEL,** Hoffman, 429 West Broadway (through March 22).

## OTHER GALLERIES

**Jenny Holzer**—A show of new work. Through June 18. (Dia Art Foundation, 548 W. 22nd St. Opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays.)

**Ouattara**—A Senoufo tribesman from the Ivory Coast turned hip artster, Ouattara paints images of shields, masks, and stylized statuary and applies small African sculptures and animal horns to them. The result is a predictable dreamy Expressionism, like that of an African Mimmo Palladino. Bizarre, but the cross-pollination is a healthy sign. Through March 11. (Baghoomian, 611 Broadway.)

**"The Avant-Garde Book"**—Symbolism, Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Dada, Constructivism, and Surrealism on the page, plus three early editions of "Tristram Shandy" and a facsimile of Blake's "Book of Urizen." Laurence Sterne's and Marcel Duchamp's items are the most radical in this exhibition, which, though short on visual incident, is a must for those who, like Stéphane Mallarmé, believe that "the folding of a book/has/an almost religious/significance." Through May 6. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

**P.S. 1**—A remarkable show of "Secret Pictures" by Hilma af Klint (1862-1944), a Swedish artist and mystic. Until 1905, Klint was an extrovert who painted portraits and landscapes. When she discovered the theosophical teachings of H. P. Blavatsky, she began to produce these strange, luminous, and often very beautiful abstractions, on loan from Stockholm. . . . ¶ Also, "Theatergarden Bestiarium," a confused and pretentious exhibition of scale models and installations by thirteen European and American artists on the theme, possibly, of the ways art could be exhibited in the future. Through March 12. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

**Group Shows**—*At the* **BURGIN,** 270 Lafayette St.: "Seeing Is Believing," a pleasant small exhibit showing the irreverent side of conceptual art. Through March 15. . . . **WHITE COLUMNS,** 325 Spring St., at Greenwich St.: "About Devices" is a low-key show of work in various mediums by little-known, mostly younger artists. The "device" in question suggests rocket capsules and certain pronged lighting fixtures. Through March 11. (Opens at noon.)

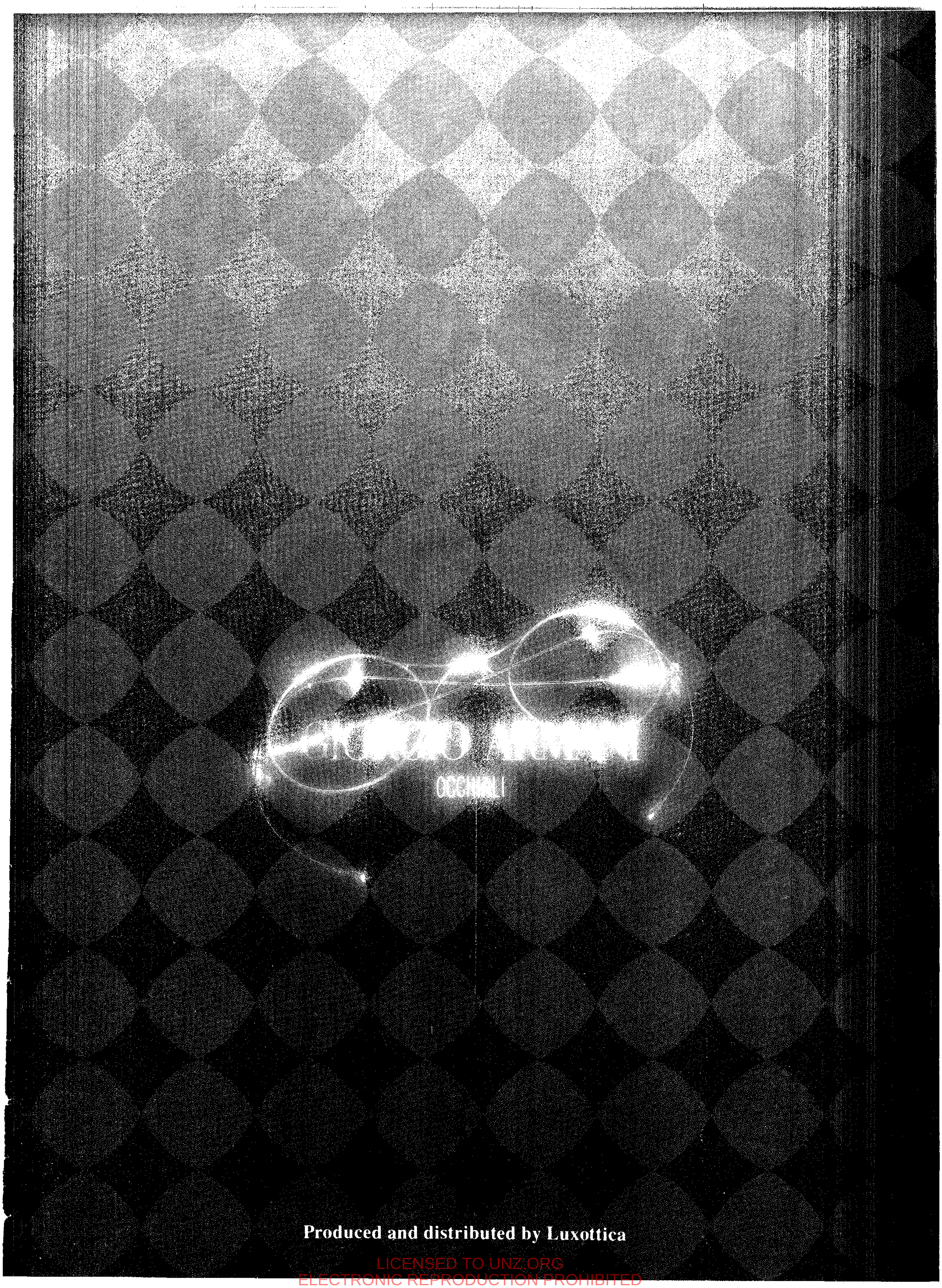
# PHOTOGRAPHY

THE good news is that there is an intimate experience left in these blockbuster times. While the crowds are getting bigger and bigger at painting and sculpture shows, if you're in a gallery devoted exclusively to photography, chances are there's nobody blocking your view. The bad news is that this means tough times for these galleries. Not that there isn't plenty of photography around. Right now one can see small retrospectives by Robert Adams, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, and Lee Friedlander, three heavies in the field. And there's the first show of photographs by the ingenious painting team of Peter McGough and David McDermott, who have turned to the camera for their reinventions of the past. Theirs aren't the only pictures to provide a sense of déjà vu: Ellen Brooks' technically sophisticated new work suggests Impressionism and Pointillism as strongly as it reflects today's hip theme of emptiness. Brooks is one of a growing number of photographers who show in galleries usually given over to painting and sculpture. Their work is expansive in size as well as in price (like paintings today), and its artlike qualities resuscitate yet another ghost—the "photography versus art" fuss. Some are making terrific use of the *medium, some are not. But photography* fans should rejoice in the attention these double agents are getting: it's partly responsible for the nice, quiet atmosphere that nowadays makes a photography gallery feel like a room of one's own.

**Walker Evans** (1903-75)—Looking at Evans' work is always a pleasure. However, this exhibition feels like an extra pleasure—a homecoming. It includes most of the images in "American Photographs," the 1938 MOMA Evans publication that has now been reissued by the museum. Through April 11. (Museum of Modern Art.)

**Adam Füss**—The second room of this show is where Füss's experimental work comes alive *and where you find his prodigious use of color.* His photograms exist simultaneously as beautiful abstract works and as microscopic details of commonplace substances—water, powder, seaweed. Through March 11. (Audiello, 142 Greene St.)

**Christopher Makos**—One could think of this photographer as belonging to the social-whirl school, because his images are often snapped at high-powered parties and generally appear in fashionable magazines. But Makos is a


GIORGIO ARMANI
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### PHOTOGRAPHY–Cont'd

terrific paparazzo and more. His portraits of Andy Warhol—some here, many more at the Warhol show at Feldman—add up to a complex and loving record of the man, who was less sphinx-like than usual for his friend's camera. (Bernarducci, 560 Broadway; through March 11. . . . ¶ Feldman, 31 Mercer St.; through March 18.)

**Ray Mortenson**—These large black-and-white photographs of South Bronx interiors that were ready for demolition—one burned out, another with children's drawings on the wall, all littered with peeling paint—fail to penetrate beyond a documentary candor. Through March 25. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

**William Henry Fox Talbot** (1800-77)—Full of the excitement of a new invention, this exhibition of Talbot's "Pencil of Nature"—the first book ever to include photographs—is the place to go to celebrate the beginning of photography. Talbot's sense of the medium's impact on art, and more generally on how the camera affects the way we see the world, turns out to have been on the button. Through April 9. (Metropolitan Museum.)

**"Women / Men"**—There are many terrific pictures here, including a treat for Weegee fans, but this exhibition, with its teasing title, forces them into what often feels like a false framework. A Kertész that is more about snow falling on a sculpture than about women is just one example of how little the title has to do with what's on the walls. Through March 31. (Seagram Building, fourth floor, 375 Park Ave., at 52nd St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

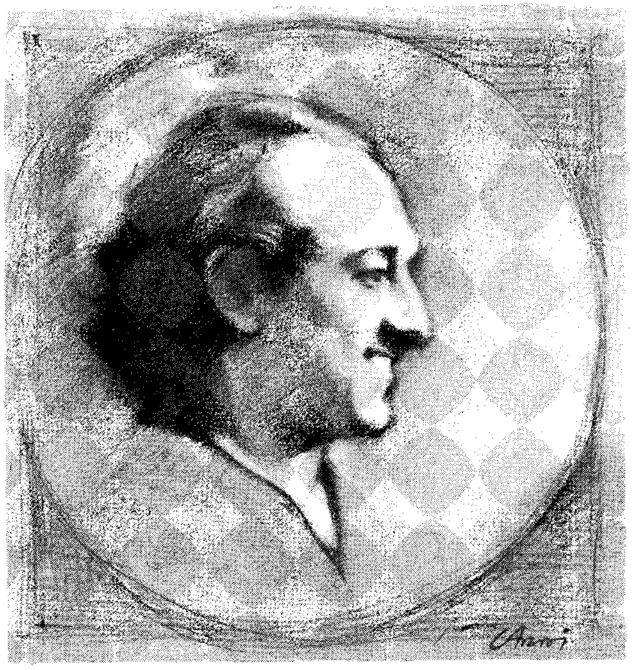
**Short List**—**robert adams,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St., opens at noon (through March 18); **manuel alvarez bravo,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway, opens at noon on Saturdays (through April 1); **dianne blell,** Castelli, 578 Broadway (through March 25); **ellen brooks,** Nosei, 100 Prince St. (through March 15); **lee friedlander,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through April 8); **david mc dermott and peter mc gough,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through March 25).

## MUSIC

THE center of interest at the Metropolitan Opera this week will be the revival of "Eugene Onegin," Tchaikovsky's "lyric scenes" from Pushkin, on Thursday the 9th and Monday the 13th. The opera is a work in which restraint and precision of psychological observation temper—balance—melody's generous and irrational flow. The announced Tatyana, Mirella Freni, has been kept out of this week's performances with the flu. But the Met has found a more than plausible replacement: the Bolshoi Opera's Makvala Kasrashvili, whose Tatyana enchanted New Yorkers in 1979, and who vanished from American stages during what might be called the period of stagnation. The Met performances will be her first here since then.

Around her are assembled the baritone Jorma Hynninen, whose interpretations have provoked interest ever since he came here, with the Finnish National Opera; Jerry Hadley, the American tenor; and Nicolai Ghiaurov, the Bulgarian bass.

Another operatic event calls for attention. On Sunday, March 12th, Handel's "Orlando" comes to Avery Fisher Hall. America has heard the opera in startlingly divergent forms—an intimate, updated version, directed by Peter Sellars, that enchanted its viewers in Cambridge, and a big-hall, grand-opera version built around Marilyn Horne and seen in San Francisco and elsewhere. At Avery Fisher, the lights will be focussed on still another facet of the work: period instruments, conducted by Christopher Hogwood, will be played, and singers prominent in the early-music movement (notably soprano Emma Kirkby and countertenor James Bowman) will sing.



*Maurizio Pollini*

### OPERA

**Metropolitan Opera**—**werther,** with Kathleen Kuhlmann, Dawn Upshaw, Neil Shicoff, and Bernd Weikl; conducted by Jean Fournet. (March 6 at 8.) . . . With Kathleen Kuhlmann, Dawn Upshaw, Neil Shicoff, and Timothy Noble; Jean Fournet. (March 10 at 8.) . . . With Dawn Upshaw, Martine Dupuy, Neil Schicoff, and Bernd Weikl; Jean Fournet. (March 14 at 8.) . . . **salome,** with Eva Marton, Helga Dernesch, Graham Clark, Mark Baker, and Bernd Weikl; Marek Janowski. (March 7 at 8 and March 11 at 2.) . . . **la bohème,** with Kallen Esperian, Carol Neblett, Placido Domingo, and Paolo Coni; Nello Santi. (March 8 at 8.) . . . With Fiamma Izzo D'Amico, Carol Neblett, Placido Domingo, and Paolo Coni; Nello Santi. (March 11 at 8.) . . . With Fiamma Izzo D'Amico, Myra Merritt, Placido Domingo, and Paolo Coni; Nello Santi. (March 15 at 8.) . . . **eugene onegin,** with Makvala Kasrashvili, Jorma Hynninen, Jerry Hadley, and Nicolai Ghiaurov; Andrew Litton. (March 9 and March 13 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

**Opera Ensemble of New York**—Donald Johnston directing the première of Hugo Weisgall's "Will You Marry Me?" and other works by Weisgall. (Lillie Blake School Theatre, 45 E. 81st St. March 8 and March 10 at 8, and March 12 at 3. For information about tickets, call 288-1485.)

**Downtown Chamber and Opera Players**—Mimi Stern-Wolfe conducting contemporary vocal works set to poems by Tennessee Williams, Langston Hughes, Harold Pinter, Samuel Beckett, and others. (Midtown Y, 344 E. 14th St. 674-7200. March 11 at 8.)

**Amato Opera Company**—Presenting "The Marriage of Figaro." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. March 11 at 7:30 and March 12 at 2:30.)

### ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 415-5440. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

**New York Philharmonic**—At Avery Fisher Hall. March 7 at 8: Felix Kruglikov conducting a Brahms-Prokofiev-Strauss program, with Philip Myers, horn. . . . ¶ March 9 at 8, March 10 at 2, March 11 at 8, and March 14 at 7:30: Erich Leinsdorf conducting music by Stravinsky, Ravel, and Wilhelm Stenhammar. With Cristina Ortiz, piano.

**Israel Philharmonic**—At Carnegie Hall, Zubin Mehta conducting. March 9 at 8: Music by Mark Kopytman, Mozart, and Brahms, with Murray Perahia, piano, and Gina Bashari, contralto. . . . ¶ March 11 at 8: Music by Brahms and Schoenberg, with Itzhak Perlman, violin.

**St. Paul Chamber Orchestra**—Hugh Wolff conducting, with Cho-Liang Lin, violin. (Avery Fisher Hall. March 10 at 8.)

**New York Pops**—Skitch Henderson conducting the music of Steve Allen, who will be at the piano. (Carnegie Hall. March 10 at 8, and March 11 at 2.)

**Philharmonia Virtuosi**—Richard Kapp conducting Vivaldi concertos (seven, altogether), with soloists from the orchestra. (Triplex, 199 Chambers St. 618-1980. March 10 at 8. . . . ¶ Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. March 14 at 8.)

**New York Chamber Symphony**—Gerard Schwarz conducting the New York première of George Perle's "Sinfonietta"; a Mendelssohn piano concerto, with John Browning; and Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony. (92nd Street Y. March 11 at 8 and March 12 at 3.)

**Brooklyn Philharmonic**—Lukas Foss conducting Beethoven's Ninth and Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms." With choral groups from all over the country. (Carnegie Hall. March 12 at 8.)

**Orpheus**—With Alfred Brendel, piano, in two all-Mozart concerts. (Carnegie Hall. March 13 and March 18 at 8.)

**New Amsterdam Singers**—Clara Longstreth directing works by Bach, Stravinksy, and Mozart. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. March 12 at 4.)

**"Orlando"**—Handel's oratorio, performed by the Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood directing. With Emma Kirkby and Lynne Dawson, sopranos; Catherine Robbin, mezzo-soprano; James Bowman, countertenor; and David Thomas, bass. (Avery Fisher Hall. March 12 at 8.)

**St. Thomas Choir**—Gerre Hancock directing the choir, soloists, and Concert Royal in a performance of "St. John's Passion." (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. March 14 at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

### RECITALS

**Edmund Niemann and Nurit Tilles**—Duo piano. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. March 8 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

**Arditti String Quartet**—Performing contemporary works. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. March 8 at 7:30.)

**Jean-Pierre Rampal**—Flute. (Carnegie Hall. March 8 at 8.)

**Andrew Rangell**—Piano, in the fifth of his seven concerts devoted to the Beethoven sonatas. (92nd Street Y. March 8 at 8.)

**Eugene Bondi**—Cello. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 8 at 8.)

**Jean-Yves Thibaudet**—Piano, performing preludes by Debussy and Chopin. (Alice Tully Hall. March 9 at 8.)

**Songs by John Cage**—Nine vocal soloists, three pianists, and a narrator, presented by the Alliance for American Song. The program includes settings to writings by Cummings, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Thoreau, and Cage himself. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. March 9 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

**North/South Consonance**—Max Lifchitz conducting a chamber ensemble in music composed since 1923. (Americas Society, Park

Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950. March 10 at 8.)

**Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**—Performing, among other works, the première of Ned Rorem's "Bright Music," a commissioned piece for two violins, a flute, a cello, and a piano. (Alice Tully Hall. March 10 at 8, March 11 at 2, and March 12 at 5.)

**Continuum**—Presenting a selection of Leon Kirchner's chamber works, in honor of his seventieth birthday. (Alice Tully Hall. March 11 at 8.)

**André Watts**—Piano, in works by Beethoven, Debussy, and Schubert. (Avery Fisher Hall. March 12 at 3.)

**Ensemble for Early Music**—Frederick Renz directing songs from medieval Europe. (Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park. 923-3700. March 12 at 3.)

**Music by David Amram**—Solo and chamber works, and a demonstration of traditional Middle Eastern instruments, including the halil, the tov, the tambor, and shepherd's flutes. (Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. March 12 at 3. For information about tickets, call 860-1863.)

**Chelsea Chamber Ensemble**—Playing pieces by Bach, Copland, and Bartók. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. March 12 at 4. Admission by contribution.)

**Carmina String Quartet**—A group from Zurich, in its début here. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. March 12 at 5.)

**Lindsay String Quartet**—A British group playing music by its compatriots Haydn and Britten, and also a work by Beethoven. (Alice Tully Hall. March 12 at 8.)

**Christine Schadeberg**—Soprano, singing new music. With assisting artists. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. March 13 at 8.)

**Maurizio Pollini**—Piano, performing *Klavierstücken* by Brahms, Schoenberg, and Stockhausen, and a sonata by Beethoven. (Carnegie Hall. March 14 at 8.)

**Juilliard String Quartet**—Playing Bach's "Art of the Fugue." (92nd Street Y. March 14-15 at 8.)

**New Music Consort**—Performing works by Elliott Carter, Aaron Kernis, and Milton Babbitt. With Claire Heldrich, conductor; Rolf Schulte, violin; and Martin Goldray, piano. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. March 15 at 8.)

**New York New Music Ensemble**—Robert Black conducting. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 15 at 8.)

**Guarneri Quartet**—With Vladimir Feltsman, piano, in a Beethoven-Schubert-Schnitke program. (Alice Tully Hall. March 15 at 8.)

## JAZZ / ROCK / POP / PERSONAL APPEARANCES

**Johnny Winter**—Though his popularity peaked during the Southern-rock phase of the nineteen-seventies, Winter's guitar playing is still screaming and bad-ass and reminiscent of the good old Allmans. What's more, he still wears his cowboy hat, and he still sports a supper-dish-size tattoo of a fire-breathing tiger over his heart. With Buddy Guy, Junior Wells, and the fat and sexy Dr. John. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. March 10 at 8.)

**Duran Duran**—These video stars are better in concert than you'd expect. The crowd will be young and the beat will be big. The show will look and sound vaguely European—like a Bloomingdale's model—and it will probably delight anyone who loves to shop. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. March 10 at 8.)

**Guy Klucevsek**—An accordionist with an extensive collection of polkas, the likes of which are as far from Lawrence Welk as you could imagine. If you have never thought of the accordion as a new-music instrument, go see Mr. Klucevsek. You'll be surprised by the possibilities. He is joined by the avant-garde vocalist David Garland, host of WNYC's eclectic radio program "Spinning on Air," and by percussionist A. Leroy's ensemble and the duo piano team of Edmund Niemann and Nurit Tilles.

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(Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. March 12 at 3.)

**Van Morrison**—Beacon Theatre. March 6-9 at 8.

**Highlights in Jazz**—A salute to Red Rodney, with Jimmy Heath, Benny Powell, Claudio Roditi, the Red Rodney quintet, and others. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 998-4949. March 9 at 8.)

**String Trio of New York**—With Jay Clayton. (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. March 9 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

**The Whispers**—Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 864-0372. March 9 at 8, March 10 at 8 and midnight, and March 11 at 8.

**Bon Jovi**—Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 587-9222. March 10 at 8. . . . ¶ Byrne Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. March 15 at 7:30.

**The Mighty Sparrow and Ancient Vibrations**—Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. March 10 at 8.

**Bruce Cockburn**—Beacon Theatre. March 11 at 8.

**"Masters of the Folk Violin"**—Seamus Connolly, Kenny Baker, Michael Doucet, Howard Armstrong, Joe Cormier, and Alison Krauss. (Julia Richman High School Auditorium, 317 E. 67th St. March 11 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

**Manny Oquendo y Libre**—With Son de la Loma. (Symphony Space. March 11 at 8.)

**Antonio Carlos Jobim**—With Gal Costa. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. March 15 at 8.)

**Roulette**—March 9: The Gregg Bendian Project. . . . ¶ March 11: Robert Dick and Marielana Arizpe. . . . ¶ March 12: Jay Clayton. (228 West Broadway. Evenings at 9. For reservations, call 219-8242.)

# SPORTS

## HOME TEAMS

**Knicks**—Vs. the Phoenix Suns, March 7 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Indiana Pacers, March 11 at 8:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Seattle Supersonics, March 14 at 7:30.

**Nets**—Away until March 17, when they meet the Washington Bullets.

**Rangers**—Vs. the Buffalo Sabres, March 8. . . . ¶ Vs. the Calgary Flames, March 13. . . . ¶ Vs. the Winnipeg Jets, March 15. (Game time: 7:30.)

**Islanders**—Vs. the Boston Bruins, March 7 at 8:05. . . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, March 9 at 8:05. . . . ¶ Vs. the Devils, March 11 at 7:05.

**Devils**—Vs. the Calgary Flames, March 14 at 7:45.

**Mets, Yankees**—Baseball team owners' meeting, March 9-10, in Fort Lauderdale. March 11 is the last day for players to renew their contracts.

(Home base for the Rangers and the Knicks is Madison Square Garden, 563-8300; for the Islanders, Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 587-9222; and for the Devils and the Nets, Byrne Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

## RACING

**Horses**—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. . . . ¶ Trotting at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8. . . . At Meadowlands: Nightly at 7:30.

**Fat-Tire Bikes**—In Flushing Meadow, Queens, on March 12 at 10: A biathlon in which competitors will start near the skating rink, run two miles, bike ten miles, then run another two miles, all along the bumpy roads of the 1964 World's Fair grounds.

## *CHAMPIONSHIPS—BASKETBALL*

**Big East Conference Finals**—At Madison Square Garden. Among the college teams vying for the Big East title are Georgetown, Seton Hall, Syracuse, and our own St. John's. March 11 at 1:30: The semifinal doubleheader. . . . ¶ March 12 at 2:30: The championship game.

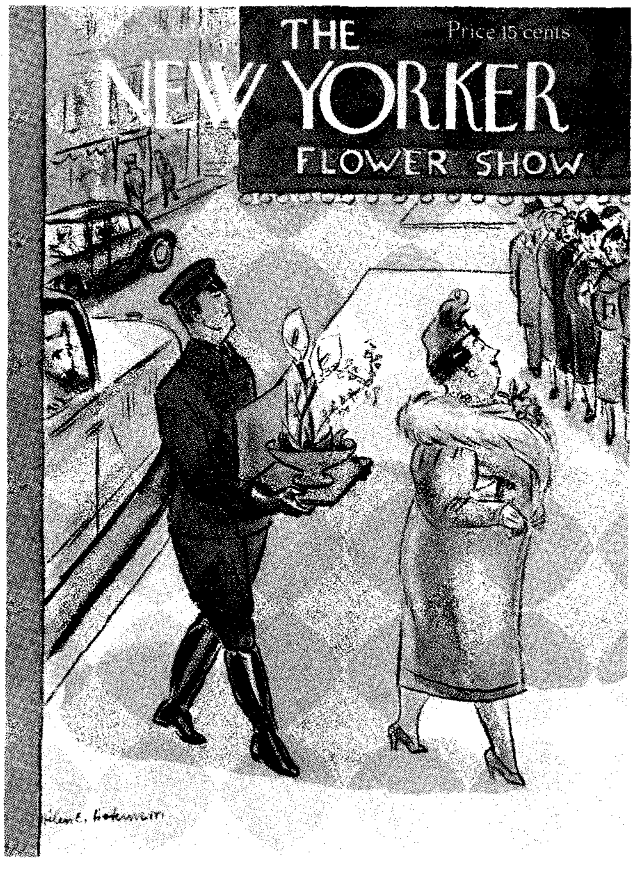
**Public Schools Athletic League**—At the Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden, on March 13. At 4: The boys' "B"s. . . . ¶ At 5:45: The girls. . . . ¶ At 7:30: The boys' "A"s.

# ABOVE AND BEYOND

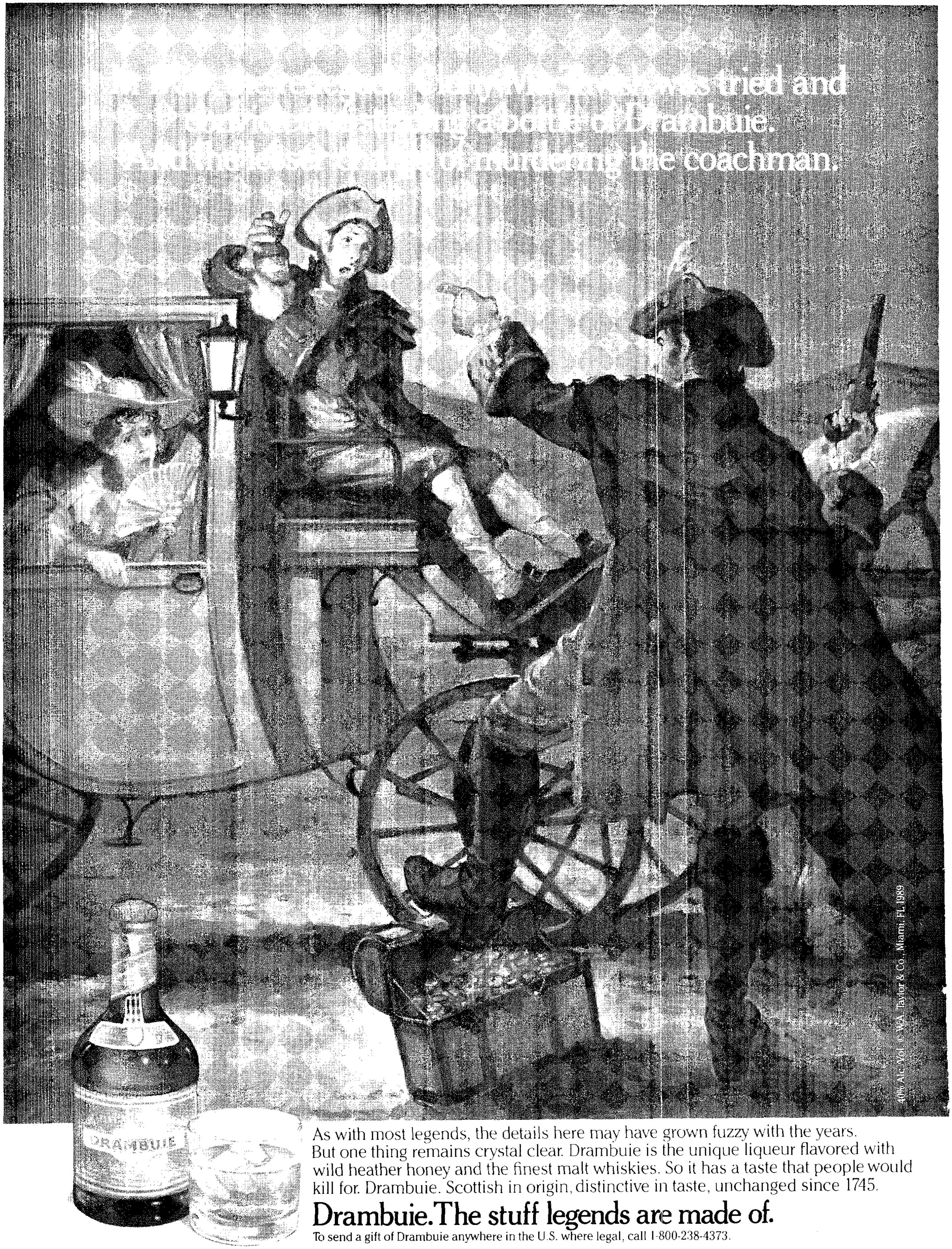
**Garden Parties**—The last thing you'd expect to stumble upon in early March is forty-two gardens in full bloom, but that's exactly what you'll stumble upon at the New York Flower Show. This year's exhibit includes offerings from the New York Botanical Garden and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, as well as examples of rock gardens from Japan and trellis gardens from Long Island. (Pier 92, Twelfth Ave. at 52nd St. Weekdays, 10 to 8; Sundays, 10 to 6. Through March 12.) . . . ¶ Gertrude Jekyll spent almost as much time in her darkroom as she did in her perennial border. More than a hundred photographs that she took of her own gardens in Munstead Wood can be seen at the PaineWebber Art Gallery, through May 5. (Sixth Ave. at 51st St. Mondays through Fridays, 8 to 6.)

**"Designing Women"**—Sally James Farnham is the sculptor who sent Simón Bolívar galloping through Central Park; Janet Darling Webel is the landscape designer who gave us Damrosch Park. Photographs, drawings, and plans of the works of these two women and ten other landscape architects and sculptors have been assembled by the Parks Department and are on view at the Tweed Gallery through March 29. (52 Chambers St. Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 4:30.)

**Readings**—Five screenwriters, including Nora Ephron ("Heartburn") and Evan Hunter ("The Birds"), will read and discuss scenes that were cut from their screenplays; in some cases, related outtakes will be shown. (Westside Y, at 2 W. 64th St. 787-6557. March 10 at 8.) . . . ¶ Ellen Burstyn reading poems by D. H. Lawrence. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. March 13 at 8.)



*An Earlier Flower Show*


[illegible] was tried and
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And the [illegible] of murdering the coachman.
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# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

## THE MOVIE HOUSES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 21.

### EAST SIDE

**Public Theatre,** 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

March 7-8: At 6, "Dress Rehearsal" (1981, directed by Werner Schroeter; in German and French); at 8, "The Council of Love" (1981, Schroeter; in German); and, at 10, "The Charles Bukowski Tapes" (1985, Barbet Schroeder).

March 9: At 6, "Laughing Star" (1983, Werner Schroeter), a documentary; and "Eika Katappa" (1969, Schroeter); and, at 10, "The Charles Bukowski Tapes."

March 10: "The Charles Bukowski Tapes."

March 11: All seven hours of "The Singing Detective" (Jon Amiel), with Michael Gambon.

March 12 and 14-15: "The Charles Bukowski Tapes."

**Movieland 8th Street Triplex,** 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: Through March 9: "Tap" (†). From March 10: To be announced.

Theatre 2: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Theatre 3: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.

**Gramercy,** Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"New York Stories" (Woody Allen, Francis Coppola, and Martin Scorsese).

**Bay Cinema,** 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.

**Murray Hill,** 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

"Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.

**Loews 34th Street Showplace,** 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Cousins" (†).

Theatre 2: "Mississippi Burning" (†).

Theatre 3: "Rain Man" (†).

**34th St. East,** 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"Working Girl" (†).

**Eastside Cinema,** 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

Through March 9: "Stand and Deliver" (†); and "A Cry in the Dark" (Fred Schepisi), with Meryl Streep and Sam Neill.

From March 10: To be announced.

**Sutton,** 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

"Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.

**Gotham Cinema,** 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.

**Plaza,** 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

Through March 9: "Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure" (Stephen Herek).

From March 10: "Jacknife" (David Jones), with Robert De Niro, Ed Harris, and Kathy Baker.

**Manhattan Twin,** 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Heart of Midnight" (Matthew Chapman), with Jennifer Jason Leigh and Peter Coyote.

Theatre 2: "Farewell to the King" (John Milius), with Nick Nolte and Nigel Havers.

**D. W. Griffith,** 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Dream a Little Dream" (Marc Rocco), with Corey Haim.

**Baronet and Coronet,** 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: Through March 9: "The 'Burbs" (†). From March 10: "Working Girl" (†).

Theatre 2: Through March 9: "Working Girl" (†). From March 10: "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (Terry Gilliam), with John Neville, Eric Idle, Uma Thurman, Oliver Reed, and Sarah Polley.

**Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue,** 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "New York Stories" (Woody Allen, Francis Coppola, and Martin Scorsese).

Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Theatre 3: "Beaches" (†).

**Gemini I and 2,** 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "Out Cold" (†).

Theatre 2: Through March 9: "Tap" (†). From March 10: "Chances Are" (Emile Ardolino), with Cybill Shepherd and Robert Downey, Jr.

**Beekman,** 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"True Believer" (†).

**Loews New York Twin,** 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "Cousins" (†).

Theatre 2: "Rain Man" (†).

**68th St. Playhouse,** 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

**Loews Tower East,** 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Mississippi Burning" (†).

**U.A. East,** 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"The 'Burbs" (†).

**Loews Orpheum I and 2,** 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)

Theatre 1: Through March 9: "Tap" (†). From March 10: To be announced.

Theatre 2: "Farewell to the King" (John Milius), with Nick Nolte and Nigel Havers.

**86th Street East Twin,** 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "Dream a Little Dream" (Marc Rocco), with Corey Haim.

Theatre 2: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.

### WEST SIDE

**Film Forum I,** 57 Watts St. (431-1590)

Through March 7: "Used Innocence" (1988, directed by James Benning).

From March 8: "Lightning Over Braddock: A Rustbowl Fantasy" (†).

**Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2,** 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

Theatre 1: (Separate admissions) "Outrageous Animation," twenty-two animated films from twelve countries; "Virgin Machine" (Monika Treut; in German), with Ina Blum; and "We Think the World of You" (Colin Gregg), with Alan Bates and Gary Oldman.

Theatre 2: "Wings of Desire" (Wim Wenders; in German), with Bruno Ganz, Otto Sander, and Solveig Dommartin.

**Waverly I and 2,** 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "Working Girl" (†).

Theatre 2: "Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.

**8th St. Playhouse,** 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

"Out Cold" (†).

**Art Greenwich Twin,** Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "True Believer" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

**Quad Cinema,** 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "Salaam Bombay!" (Mira Nair; in Hindi).

Theatre 2: "Torch Song Trilogy" (Paul Bogart), with Anne Bancroft, Matthew Broderick, Harvey Fierstein, Brian Kerwin, Ken Page, and Charles Pierce.

Theatre 3: "36 Fillette" (Catherine Breillat; in French).

Theatre 4: Through March 9: "Matador" (Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish), with Antonio Banderas, Assumpta Serna, and Nacho Martínez; and "Law of Desire" (1987, Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish), with Carmen Maura, Eusebio Poncela, and Antonio Banderas. From March 10: "The Dressmaker" (†).

**23rd St. West Triplex,** 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.

Theatre 2: "True Believer" (†).

Theatre 3: "The 'Burbs" (†).

**Guild,** 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"New York Stories" (Woody Allen, Francis Coppola, and Martin Scorsese).

**Ziegfeld,** 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"Lawrence of Arabia" (†).

**Festival,** 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

**57th St. Playhouse,** 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

Through March 9: "Bert Rigby, You're a Fool" (Carl Reiner), with Robert Lindsay.

From March 10: "Echoes of Paradise" (Phillip Noyce), with Wendy Hughes and John Lone.

**Carnegie Hall Cinema,** 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Paperhouse" (Bernard Rose), with Charlotte Burke, Ben Cross, and Glenne Headly.

**Carnegie Screening Room,** 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

"The Luckiest Man in the World" (Frank D. Gilroy), with Philip Bosco.

**Paris,** 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)

Through March 9: "The Dressmaker" (†).

From March 10: "Hanussen" (István Szabó; in Hungarian), with Klaus Maria Brandauer and Erland Josephson.

**Cinema 3,** 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

Through March 9: "The Mighty Quinn" (Carl Schenkel), with Denzel Washington and Robert Townsend.

From March 10: "The 'Burbs" (†).

Collet

*Morgan Freeman in "Lean on Me"*

**Loews Paramount,** B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"Rain Man" (†).

**Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3,** B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "Pelle the Conqueror" (†).

Theatre 2: "High Hopes" (†).

Theatre 3: "Under the Sun of Satan" (Maurice Pialat; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Sandrine Bonnaire.

**Cinema Studio I and 2,** B'way at 66th. (877-4040)

Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).

Theatre 2: Through March 9: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†). From March 10: "Chocolat" (Claire Denis; in French).

**Regency,** B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

"Working Girl" (†).

**Loews 84th Street Sixplex,** B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "New York Stories" (Woody Allen, Francis Coppola, and Martin Scorsese).

Theatre 2: "Farewell to the King" (John Milius), with Nick Nolte and Nigel Havers.

Theatre 3: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.

Theatre 4: Through March 9: "Cousins" (†). From March 10 (tentative): "Chances Are" (Emile Ardolino), with Cybill Shepherd and Robert Downey, Jr.

Theatre 5: Through March 9: "Tap" (†). From March 10 (tentative): "Police Academy 6: City Under Siege" (Peter Bonerz) with Bubba Smith.

Theatre 6: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

**Metro Cinema I and 2,** B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "The Last Temptation of Christ" (Martin Scorsese), with Willem Dafoe.

Theatre 2: "The 'Burbs" (†).

**Olympia I and II,** B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

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Carefree Color for Summer

The loveliest flower of summer is the Lily. Its glorious colors and varied forms, often graced with rich perfume, are superb in mixed borders, exquisite on their own. Of course, they also provide long-lasting cut flowers. But named varieties of Lilies are too expensive to scatter around like Daffodils. Our Lily Naturalizing Mixture is not. It is made up of recent hybrids secured from a breeder of our acquaintance. They come from strains grown for cut flowers and the parents include some of the most elegant flowers ever seen, with heights generally in the two-foot range—short enough, that is, not to need staking. They offer an exhilarating display that begins in June and lasts for weeks with a range of color that tempts hyperbole. Better yet, these Lilies will thrive and self-propagate in the sunny, well-drained sites they like, actually adding to the show year after year. They are impervious to heat and drought, though deer will snip the tender buds.

Our Lily Naturalizing Mixture, #84200, includes reds, oranges, yellows, and whites, plus all the delicious variations in between. Bulbs vary in size, as seedlings will, but all are blooming size and will flower abundantly this summer. The mixture is priced at $35 for 50 bulbs, $55 for 100 and will be shipped, with detailed planting instructions, in time for spring planting. To receive your bulbs, please order by name and number and add transportation charges of 10% east of the Mississippi, 15% west except 20% to Pacific Coast states (to CT & CA addresses, add sales tax). Phone orders are welcome at (203) 496-9600 weekdays until 6. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Amos Pettingill

White Flower Farm
PLANTSMEN
Litchfield 8310, Connecticut 06759-0050

Theatre 1: "True Believer" (†).
Theatre 2: "Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.

## TIMES SQUARE AREA

**Criterion Center,** B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 9: "Out Cold" (†). From March 10: "Chances Are" (Emile Ardolino), with Cybill Shepherd and Robert Downey, Jr.
Theatre 3: "Skin Deep" (directed by Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.
Theatre 4: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 5: Through March 9: "Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure" (Stephen Herek). From March 10: "Police Academy 6: City Under Siege" (Peter Bonerz), with Bubba Smith.
Theatre 6: "Tap" (†).

**Embassy 1,** B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"The Mighty Quinn" (Carl Schenkel), with Denzel Washington and Robert Townsend.

**Embassy 2, 3, and 4,** 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: Through March 9: "Heart of Midnight" (Matthew Chapman), with Jennifer Jason Leigh and Peter Coyote. From March 10: "Beaches" (†).
Theatre 3: "Three Fugitives" (†).
Theatre 4: Through March 9: "Cousins" (†). From March 10 (tentative): "Heart of Midnight."

**Loews Astor Plaza,** 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Farewell to the King" (John Milius), with Nick Nolte and Nigel Havers.

**Movieland,** B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"True Believer" (†).

**National Twin,** B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "The Fly II" (Chris Walas), with Eric Stoltz.
Theatre 2: "The 'Burbs" (†).

**Warner,** 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"Mississippi Burning" (†).

**West Side Cinema 1 and 2,** 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.
Theatre 2: "Lean on Me."

## REVIVAL HOUSES

**Biograph Cinema,** 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
March 6: "Beau Geste" (1939, directed by William Wellman), with Gary Cooper, Ray Milland, Robert Preston, and Brian Donlevy; and "Destry Rides Again" (1939, George Marshall), with Marlene Dietrich, James Stewart, Brian Donlevy, Charles Winninger, and Una Merkel.
March 7-8: "The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle" (1939, H. C. Potter), with Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Edna May Oliver, and Walter Brennan; and "Ice Follies of 1939" (Reinhold Schunzel), with Joan Crawford, James Stewart, and Lew Ayres.
March 9-11: "The Great Man Votes" (1939, Garson Kanin), with John Barrymore, Peter Holden, and Virginia Weidler; and "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" (1939, Frank Capra), with Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Claude Rains, Guy Kibbee, and Beulah Bondi.
March 12-13: "The Rains Came" (1939, Clarence Brown), with Myrna Loy, Tyrone Power, and George Brent; and "In Name Only" (1939, John Cromwell), with Carole Lombard, Cary Grant, Peggy Ann Garner, and Kay Francis.
March 14-15: "At the Circus" (1939, Mervyn LeRoy), with the Marx Brothers, Eve Arden, and Margaret Dumont; and "You Can't Cheat an Honest Man" (1939, George Marshall), with W. C. Fields, Charlie McCarthy, and Edgar Bergen.

**Cinema Village,** 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through March 7: "Track 29" (1988, Nicolas Roeg), with Theresa Russell and Gary Oldman; and "Don't Look Now" (1973, Nicolas Roeg), with Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland.
March 8-9: "Down by Law" (1986, Jim Jarmusch), with Tom Waits, John Lurie, and Ellen Barkin, Billie Neal, Nicoletta Braschi, Rockets Red Glare; and "Big Time" (1988, Chris Blum), with Tom Waits.
March 10-11: Cartoons by Tex Avery; and Bugs Bunny cartoons.
March 12: "The Arabian Nights" (1973, Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian); and "The Witches" (1969, Luchino Visconti, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Mauro Bolognini, Franco Rossi, and Vittorio De Sica; in Italian).
March 13-14: "Wizards" (1977, Ralph Bakshi) and "Vampires in Havana" (1986, Juan Padron; a Cuban film, in Spanish), both animated films.
From March 15: "Last Tango in Paris" (†); and "Luna" (1979, Bernardo Bertolucci), with Jill Clayburgh and Matthew Barry.

**Film Forum 2,** 57 Watts St. (431-1590)
Through March 8: "Ali: Fear Eats the Soul" (1974) and "Mother Küsters Goes to Heaven" (1975), both in German, directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder, with Brigitte Mira.
March 9: "Lili Marleen" (1981, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Hanna Schygulla and Giancarlo Giannini; and "Gods of the Plague" (1969, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Harry Baer and Hanna Schygulla.
March 10-12: "Fox and His Friends" (1976; in German), directed by, and with, Rainer Werner Fassbinder.
March 13-15: "Satan's Brew" (1977, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Kurt Raab; and "Beware of a Holy Whore" (1970, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Lou Castel, Werner Schroeter, and Eddie Constantine.

**Thalia SoHo,** 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
March 6: "A Raisin in the Sun" (1961, Daniel Petrie), with Sidney Poitier, Claudia McNeil, Diana Sands, and Ruby Dee; and "The Member of the Wedding" (1952, Fred Zinnemann), with Ethel Waters, Julie Harris, and Brandon deWilde.
March 7: "Born Yesterday" (1950, George Cukor), with Judy Holliday, William Holden, and Broderick Crawford; and "The Marrying Kind" (1952, George Cukor), with Judy Holliday, Aldo Ray, Madge Kennedy, and Peggy Cass.
March 8: "The Adversary" (1971, Satyajit Ray; in Bengali), with Dhritiman Chatterjee; and "Kanchenjungha" (1962, Satyajit Ray; in Bengali).
March 9: "Gun Crazy" (1949, Joseph H. Lewis), with Peggy Cummins and John Dall; and "The Undercover Man" (1949, Joseph H. Lewis), with Glenn Ford and Nina Foch.
March 10-11: "Diabolique" (1955, Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse; and "The Wages of Fear" (1953, Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Yves Montand, Charles Vanel, Folco Lulli, and Peter Van Eyck.
March 12: "La Nuit de Varennes" (†); and "Danton" (1983, Andrzej Wajda; in French), with Gérard Depardieu.
March 13: "The Sin of Harold Diddlebock" (1947, Preston Sturges), with Harold Lloyd; and "The Milky Way" (1968; Luis Buñuel; in French), with Julien Bertheau, Alain Cuny, Edith Scob, Michel Piccoli, Paul Frankeur, and Laurent Terzieff.
March 14: "The Golden Coach" (†); and "L'Amore" (1948, Roberto Rossellini; in Italian), with Anna Magnani.
March 15: "Wait Until Dark" (1967, Terence Young), with Audrey Hepburn, Alan Arkin, and Richard Crenna; and "Love in the Afternoon" (1957, Billy Wilder), with Gary Cooper, Audrey Hepburn, and Maurice Chevalier.

**Theatre 80 St. Marks,** 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
March 6: "Ashes and Diamonds" (1958, Andrzej Wajda; in Polish), with Zbigniew Cybulski; and "A Generation" (1954, Andrzej Wajda; in Polish).
March 7: "Back Street" (1932, John M. Stahl), with Irene Dunne and John Boles; and "Magnificent Obsession" (1935, John M. Stahl), with Irene Dunne, Robert Taylor, Paul Lukas, ZaSu Pitts, and June Clyde.
March 8: "The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe" (1954, Luis Buñuel), with Dan O'Herlihy and James Fernandez; and "El" ("This Strange Passion"; 1952, Luis Buñuel; in Spanish), with Arturo de Cordova.
March 9: "Three Strangers" (1946, Jean Negulesco), with Geraldine Fitzgerald, Peter Lorre, and Sydney Greenstreet; and "The Mask of Dimitrios" (1944, Jean Negulesco), with Peter Lorre, Faye Emerson, Zachary Scott, and Sydney Greenstreet.

March 10-11: "My Man Godfrey" (1936, Gregory La Cava), with Carole Lombard, William Powell, Mischa Auer, and Alice Brady; and "Nothing Sacred" (†).

March 12: "Palm Beach Story" (†); and "The Great McGinty" (1940, Preston Sturges), with Brian Donlevy and Akim Tamiroff.

March 13: "Playtime" (1967) and "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (1953), both directed by, and with, Jacques Tati.

March 14: "Separate Tables" (1958, Delbert Mann), with Rita Hayworth, Deborah Kerr, David Niven, Burt Lancaster, and Wendy Hiller; and "Another Time, Another Place" (1983, Michael Radford), with Phyllis Logan.

March 15: "A Place in the Sun" (1951, George Stevens), with Montgomery Clift, Elizabeth Taylor, and Shelley Winters; and "The Heiress" (1949, William Wyler), with Olivia de Havilland, Montgomery Clift, and Ralph Richardson.

## FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

**Museum of Modern Art,** Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)
**THEATRE 1:** March 6-7, 9-10, and 13 at 2:30 and 6: Films nominated for the 1988 Academy Award for Best Foreign-Language Film. . . . ¶ March 11 at 2 and 5: "The Third Man" (1949, directed by Carol Reed), with Trevor Howard, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Orson Welles. . . . ¶ March 12 at 2 and 5: "Letter from an Unknown Woman" (1948, Max Ophuls), with Joan Fontaine, Louis Jourdan, and Mady Christians. . . . ¶ March 14 at 2:30 and 6: "A Double Life" (1947, George Cukor), with Ronald Colman and Signe Hasso.
**THEATRE 2:** March 6 at 6:30: Super-8 and 16-mm. films by Nick Zedd, who will be present.

**American Museum of the Moving Image,** 36th St. at 35th Ave., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—At the **RIKLIS THEATRE:** Sidney Poitier films. March 8 at 2:30: "Edge of the City" (1957, Martin Ritt). . . . ¶ March 9 at 2:30: "A Raisin in the Sun" (1961, Daniel Petrie). . . . ¶ March 10 at 2:30: "The Blackboard Jungle" (1955, Richard Brooks). . . . ¶ March 10 at 7:30: "In the Heat of the Night" (1967, Norman Jewison). . . . ¶ March 11 at 1: "Lilies of the Field" (1963, Ralph Nelson). . . . ¶ March 11 at 4: "A Warm December" (1973, Poitier). . . . ¶ March 11 at 7:30: "Cry, the Beloved Country" (1952, Zoltán Korda). . . . ¶ March 12 at 1: "The Defiant Ones" (1958, Stanley Kramer). . . . ¶ March 12 at 4: "Shoot to Kill" (1988, Roger Spottiswoode). . . . ¶ March 15 at 2:30: "Lilies of the Field."

**Anthology Film Archives,** 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the **JONAS MEKAS THEATRE** or the **MAYA DEREN THEATRE:** March 7 at 6: "Ivan the Terrible, Parts I and II" (1944-46, Sergei M. Eisenstein; in Russian). . . . ¶ March 8 at 6: "Underworld" (1927, Josef von Sternberg; silent). . . . ¶ March 8 at 8: Short films by Dwinell Grant, Jean Genet, and Robert Frank and Alfred Leslie. . . . ¶ March 9 at 6: "The Crowd" (1927, King Vidor). . . . ¶ March 9 at 8: "Une Simple Histoire" (1958, Marcel Hanoun; in French, with no subtitles). . . . ¶ March 10 at 6: "Sunrise" (1927, F. W. Murnau; silent). . . . ¶ March 10 at 8:30: Four short films by Abraham Ravett—"Thirty Years Later" (1978), "Zeger's Note" (1984), "A Calming Breeze" (1985), and "Half Sister" (1985). . . . ¶ March 11 at 6: "Strong Medicine" (1981, Richard Foreman). . . . ¶ March 11 at 8: Three films by Abraham Ravett—"Toncia" (1986), "Jack Haber" (1987), and "The Balcony" (1987). . . . ¶ March 12 at 5: "The Night of Counting Years" (1969, Shadi Abdelsalam; in Arabic). . . . ¶ March 12 at 8: "The Last Clean Shirt" (1963, Alfred Leslie) and "Eat" (1963, Andy Warhol). . . . ¶ March 14 at 7: Six short films by Peter Kubelka. . . . ¶ March 14 at 8: Films (1896-1905) by Louis and Auguste Lumière.

**Collective for Living Cinema,** 41 White St. (925-2111)—March 6 at 8: "Band of Outsiders" (1964, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina, Claude Brasseur, and Sami Frey. . . . ¶ March 7 at 8: Award-winning videos from the 22nd Annual Brooklyn Arts Council Film and Video Festival. . . . ¶ March 8 at 8: "Memories of Underdevelopment" (1973, Tomás Gutiérrez Alea; a Cuban film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ March 9 at 8: Experimental films from Japan. . . . ¶ March 10 at 8: "One Way or Another" (1974, Sara Gomez; a Cuban film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ March 11 at 8: "Lucia" (1969, Humberto Solas; a Cuban film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ March 12 at 8: "Portrait of Theresa" (1979, Pastor Vega; a Cuban film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ March 13 at 8: "La Chinoise" (1967, Godard; in French). . . . ¶ March 14 at 8: Short silent Surrealist films by Man Ray and Germaine Dulac. . . . ¶ March 15 at 8: "The Death of a Bureaucrat" (1966, Alea; a Cuban film, in Spanish).

**Japan Society,** 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—A series of films based on Japanese novels. March 10 at 7:30: "Sorekara" (1986, Yoshimitsu Morita), with Yusaku Matsuda and Miwako Fujitani.

**Whitney Museum,** Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—The film section of "Yoko Ono: Objects, Films" is showing in the Film/Video Gallery on the second floor. March 7-12: "Rape" (1969). . . . ¶ Starting March 14: "Freedom" and "Up Your Legs Forever," both made in 1970. Tuesdays at 1:30, 3:30, and 6:15; Wednesdays through Saturdays at 11:30, 1:30, and 3:30; and Sundays at 12:30, 2:30, and 4:30.

**Asia Society,** Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—The last in a series of films on Asia by German filmmakers. March 10 at 3 and 7: "Harakiri" (1919, Fritz Lang; silent), with live koto accompaniment by Reiko Kamata.

**French Institute–Alliance Française,** 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—March 8 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Three Men and a Cradle" (1985, Coline Serreau). . . . ¶ March 15 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Man Who Loved Women" (1977, François Truffaut).

**Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium,** Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—March 14 at 8: "Catherine the Great" (1934, Paul Czinner), with Elisabeth Bergner, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Flora Robson. Mr. Fairbanks will be present.

# IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Arlene Croce.)

**The Accidental Tourist**—It begins with the numb grief of a punctilious Baltimore travel writer, Macon Leary (William Hurt), whose twelve-year-old son was senselessly shot. Macon has become such a depressed loner that his wife (Kathleen Turner) leaves him. The movie, directed by Lawrence Kasdan, who wrote the screenplay with Frank Galati, closely follows the 1985 Anne Tyler novel, and it's about Macon's coming to life. A fiercely eager oddball (Geena Davis) who pulls him into her bed turns out to be his salvation. The plot construction is that of a screwball comedy of the thirties: poor working girl has the life force that upper-class prig needs. But people talk a formal, affected English that sounds counterfeit and everyone seems catatonic. With Amy Wright, Ed Begley, Jr., and David Ogden Stiers.—P.K. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/23/89.) (Cinema II, and Art Greenwich Twin.)

*"The Adventures of Baron Munchausen"*

**Beaches**—This movie about the lifelong friendship between two women of contrasting backgrounds—Bette Midler as CC Bloom, a show-biz-crazy Jewish redhead from New York, and Barbara Hershey as Hillary Whitney, a repressed wealthy Wasp from San Francisco—suggests the kind of material that Midler might be using for a takeoff. Instead, it's being played for maudlin soulfulness. After a while, it turns into an all-girl "Love Story," with Hillary becoming ghoulishly pale from heart disease and CC (now a singing star) staying at her side. If you admired Midler in "The Rose" and "Down and Out in Beverly Hills," you may want to bash your head against the wall. With Mayim Bialik, who must have been specially created to be CC at eleven, and John Heard. The director, Garry Marshall, shows no feeling for the material—not even false feeling; the script, by Mary Agnes Donoghue, is from Iris Rainer Dart's novel.—P.K. (1/23/89) (Cinema 3rd Avenue.). . . ¶ Embassy; starting March 10.)

**The 'Burbs**—A dopey comedy about a bunch of boobish suburbanites who drive themselves crazy trying to find out the truth about their weird new neighbors. Dana Olsen's script is low on wit: it makes the same points over and over again, only louder each time. The director is the very talented Joe Dante ("The Howling," "Gremlins"), but his work isn't distinctive here. He keeps the pace fairly snappy (so we know it isn't a John Landis movie), throws in a handful of odd cartoon-like effects, and that's about it. Tom Hanks, as one of the infantile homeowners, has a few terrific moments—eating a sardine, letting out an exaggerated shriek of horror, stumbling out of a blown-up house—and is fun to watch even when the jokes are lame. And Henry Gibson, playing the head of the mysterious household, brightens the movie with his meek/creepy shtick. But most of the time "The 'Burbs" feels like an Addams cartoon that somehow got turned into an Archie comic. Also with Bruce Dern, Carrie Fisher, Rick Ducommun, Gale Gordon, and Brother Theodore.—T.R. (U.A. East, 23rd St. West Triplex, Metro Cinema, and National Twin. . . . ¶ Baronet; through March 9. . . . ¶ Cinema 3; starting March 10.)

**Cousins**—Bland, dreamy effervescence is what's being sold in this canny Americanization of the celebrated French makeout movie "Cousin, Cousine" (1975). Set in the Pacific Northwest, it starts with a wedding that links Italian and Polish families. As the picture goes on and on, and you get its box-office formula—sex without messiness, family without oppressive closeness—you may begin to feel as if you were in a carefree pink padded cell, or as if you were back in a Doris Day comedy, except that this film isn't so insistently bright, and it's more woodlandsy, more radiant and idyllic. As honest, free-spirited adulterers, Isabella Rossellini and Ted Danson are at the still center, smiling serenely while the others in the cast busily bang away at their joie de vivre. Rossellini's unforced expressiveness has a grace—it's as if she were too friendly and sensible to do what we think of as "acting." Joel Schumacher directed; Stephen Metcalfe did the adaptation. With William Petersen, Sean Young, Norma Aleandro, George Coe, Lloyd Bridges, Keith Coogan, and Gina DeAngelis. Shot in British Columbia.—P.K. (3/6/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Loews New York Twin. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy; through March 9.)

**Dangerous Liaisons**—One of the least static costume films ever made, and what costumes! The women—Glenn Close, Michelle Pfeiffer, Uma Thurman, Swoosie Kurtz, Mildred Natwick—look as if they'd been dressed by Gainsborough. (Actually, it was James Acheson, who also dressed "The Last Emperor.") Principally about the erotic power games played by the Marquise de Merteuil (Glenn Close) and the Vicomte de Valmont (John Malkovich), who were once lovers but are now allies and co-conspirators, this first-rate piece of work by the daring and agile director Stephen Frears is alive in a way that movies of classics rarely are. The paradisially beautiful Pfeiffer is wonderfully affecting as the pawn of the debauchers' final game. The screenwriter, Christopher Hampton, reworked his 1985 theatrical version of the 1782 novel by Choderlos de Laclos; cinematography by Philippe Rousselot.—P.K. (1/9/89) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 68th St. Playhouse, Festival, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

**The Dressmaker**—The whole cast rises to the occasion—a chance to appear in John McGrath's fine adaptation of the 1973 Beryl Bainbridge novel (published here in 1974 as "The Secret Glass"). Joan Plowright as Nellie, the prudish unmarried dressmaker, and Billie Whitelaw as Margo, the widow with a roving eye who works in a munitions factory, are sisters. The setting is Liverpool in 1944, and the plot centers on what happens when sallow, skinny Rita (Jane Horrocks), the seventeen-year-old niece they have raised, falls in love with Wesley (Tim Ransom), a Yank from Mississippi. This good, inexpensive British movie is about morbid respectability, and the director, Jim O'Brien, makes it possible for the actors to create a maze of claustrophobic subtexts. It's doubtful if either Plowright or Whitelaw has ever before been this scarily effective onscreen; Whitelaw's sky-blue eyes stab you—she seems to have become the nakedest of performers. With Peter Postlethwaite, Pippa Hinchley, and Rosemary Martin.—P.K. (12/12/88) (Paris; through March 9. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting March 10.)

**The Golden Coach** (1953)—At his greatest, Jean Renoir expressed the beauty in our common humanity; that's what Anna Magnani at *her* greatest expressed. This movie—his tribute to the commedia dell'arte—is also a tribute to her fabulous gifts, and she gives the film its gusto. We see her here not only as a sensual, earthy "woman of the people" but as an artist who exhausts her resources in creating the illusion of volcanic reality. Though Renoir has taken Prosper Mérimée's vehicle and shaped it for her, it will be forever debatable whether it contains her or she explodes it. But as this puzzle is parallel with the theme—a Pirandellian confusion of theatre and everyday life—it adds another layer to the ironic comedy. This was Renoir's second color film (after "The River"), and his directorial rhythm seems to falter in his work in color, but in the flow and warmth of "The Golden Coach" this defect is trifling. The cinematography is by Claude Renoir.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; March 14.)

**High Hopes**—Mike Leigh's wacked-out comedy-drama about life in Thatcherland features three couples: the rich twits (David Bamber and Lesley Manville as a young champagne dealer and his cool socialite wife); the pushy yups (Philip Jackson and Heather Tobias as a boorish car salesman and his shrill, social-climber wife); the working poor (bearded Philip Davis and dark-eyed Ruth Sheen as a pot-smoking Marxist who scrapes by as a motorcycle messenger and his companion of ten years, who likes to grow things). This may sound like a liberal-left horror, but the English delight in extreme, preposterous silliness hasn't died even among the serious left: the characters keep turning into absurdist cartoons. It's an exuberantly likable movie—not always satisfying but never drab, never ordinary.—P.K. (2/20/89) (Lincoln Plaza.)

**Last Tango in Paris** (1972)—In this film Bernardo Bertolucci used sex to express the characters' drives. Marlon Brando, as the aging American, Paul, is working out his aggression on the young bourgeois French girl, Jeanne (Maria Schneider), and the physical menace of sexuality that is emotionally charged is such a departure from everything that audiences had come to expect at the movies that the film created a sensation. It's a bold and imaginative work—a great work. When Brando improvises within Bertolucci's structure, his full art is realized; his performance is intuitive, rapt, princely. Working with Brando, Bertolucci achieves realism with the terror of actual experience still alive on the screen. With Jean-Pierre Léaud, Massimo Girotti, Catherine Allegret, and Maria Michi. Script by Bertolucci and the editor, Franco Arcalli; cinematography by Vittorio Storaro; music by Gato Barbieri; production design by Ferdinando Scarfiotti. In French and English.—P.K. (Cinema Village; starting March 15.)

**Lawrence of Arabia** (1962)—If you went to see it under the delusion that it was going to be about T. E. Lawrence, you probably stayed to enjoy the vastness of the desert and the pleasures of the senses that a huge movie epic can provide. Directed by David Lean, from a script by Robert Bolt, loosely based on Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," this picture fails to give an acceptable interpretation of Lawrence, or to keep its action intelligible, but it is one of the most literate and tasteful and exciting of expensive spectacles. The central figure is played quite stunningly by Peter O'Toole, though he seems to be doing "Lord Jim"—which he was cast in a couple of years later (and then it looked as if he were doing Lawrence all over again). Bolt and Lean turn the hero into such a flamboyant poetic enigma that he is displaced in the film by a simpler hero—Omar Sharif's Ali, a handsome sheikh with liquid brown eyes and conventionally sympathetic lines to speak. As it became apparent that most people in the audience hadn't the remotest idea of what the Arabs and the Turks were doing in the First World War, or which was which, or why the English cared, the question raised by the movie was, Can complicated historical events and a complex hero really get across in a spectacle? With Alec Guinness, José Ferrer, Anthony Quinn, Arthur Kennedy, Jack Hawkins, Claude Rains, Anthony Quayle, and Donald Wolfit. Cinematography by Freddie Young; music by Maurice Jarre. (The film, substantially cut after its first release, has been restored to a more or less definitive version, running 217 minutes.)—P.K. (Ziegfeld.)

*You don't have to be a kid—or even especially childish—to enjoy the best of the Warner Brothers cartoons from the forties and fifties. These short comedies seem to have been made by, and for, arrested adolescents: they're brash, irreverent, bracingly unsentimental, and always in a hurry. The Cinema Village has put together a program honoring one of the prime movers of this style, the animator Tex Avery, and the studio's biggest star, Bugs Bunny. In the late thirties, Avery was present at the creation of Bugs, Daffy Duck, and other Warners luminaries, and their personalities were largely shaped by his wild sensibility—his fondness for stretched forms and exaggerated gestures, his lunatic, hurtling pace, his anything-for-a-gag recklessness. Avery defected to M-G-M in 1943; his skills were undiminished, though he didn't have the stars. The Avery half of the Cinema Village program consists mainly of his M-G-M work, and the Bugs Bunny compilation shows how the cheeky, resourceful rabbit fared after Avery's departure. As directed by Friz Freleng, Robert McKimson, and the incomparable Chuck Jones, these later cartoons demonstrate the unarguable and cheering principle that a bunny in motion tends to remain in motion.*

**Lightning Over Braddock: A Rustbowl Fantasy**—This first feature by the Pennsylvania independent filmmaker Tony Buba is a strange homemade mixture of fiction, autobiography, and social documentary. Buba has made fifteen short documentaries about a dying mill town called Braddock, where he was born and raised (and where he still lives); "Lightning" is in part a self-critical retrospective of his own work, a reflection on how his reputation has increased as his town's fortunes have declined. His conscience speaks with the foul-mouthed voice of Sweet Sal Caru, a weird local character who was the subject of one of Buba's most popular shorts—and who is now convinced that he's wholly responsible for the filmmaker's success. Sal hounds Buba on the phone and imagines himself as Gandhi and Rambo (in scenes populated by other "stars" of the earlier films), while the filmmaker gives interviews on Pittsburgh talk shows, shoots footage of union protests against a steel-mill closing, and indulges in some Catholic guilt about his profession. The movie is a little in love with its own flakiness, and Buba doesn't really have the skill (or maybe just the budget) to bring off the radical shifts in tone and style. But "Lightning Over Braddock" has a lively, likable spirit, and it's rarely predictable. Buba keeps things brisk and bouncy even while he's worrying about being politically correct.—T.R. (Film Forum 1; starting March 8.)

**Mississippi Burning**—Set in Mississippi in the summer of 1964, it opens with a fictionalized re-creation of the murder of the three civil-rights workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner—but it isn't really about the civil-rights movement. The director, Alan Parker, treats Southerners the way he treated the Turks ten years ago in "Midnight Express." And he twists facts here as he did there, with the same apparent objective: to come up with garish forms of violence. Two F.B.I. men (Gene Hackman and Willem Dafoe) arrive to find out what happened to the three activists, and a huge manhunt is initiated. The movie hinges on the ploy that the F.B.I. men can't stop the K.K.K. from its terrorism against blacks until they swing over to vigilante tactics. And we're put in the position of applauding the F.B.I.'s dirtiest forms of intimidation. Hackman is superb, and there's impressive work by Frances McDormand, Brad Dourif, Park Overall, and others. But the film is morally repugnant. The script is credited to Chris Gerolmo (Parker says he rewrote it).—P.K. (12/26/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, and Warner.)

**Nothing Sacred** (1937)—A screwball satire that was a huge success. What are generally sentimentalized as "the little people" are the targets of this famous thirties comedy. Ben Hecht, who wrote the script, has them dripping crocodile tears over a girl they think is dying of radium poisoning, and enjoying every minute of it. The audience may begin to wonder what makes the reporter-hero, Fredric March, and the girl, Carole Lombard—who was by that time "the Duse of daffy comedy"—any different. The answer can only be that they, like the author, hate phonyness. William Wellman's direction is more leisurely than usual; he has such good material here that he takes his time. With Walter Connolly as the dyspeptic big-city editor, Charles Winninger as the alcoholic small-town doctor, Slapsie Maxie Rosenbloom in his acting début, and Frank Fay, Margaret Hamilton, Monty Woolley, Hattie McDaniel, John Qualen, Hedda Hopper, Olin Howland, and Sig Rumann.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 10-11.)

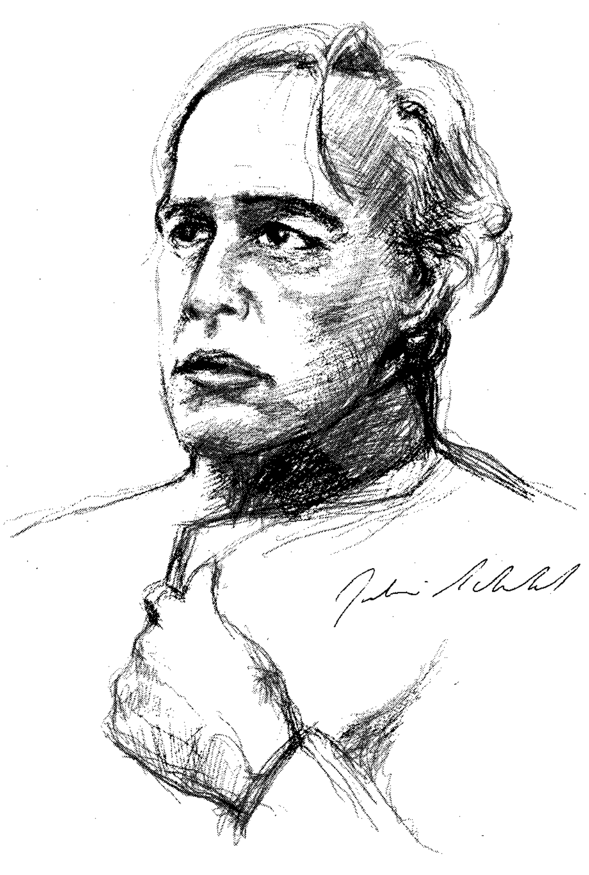
**La Nuit de Varennes** (1981)—Descended from a long line of "Gallic romps," this is a creakingly cultured historical pageant set in the time of Louis XVI. For diverse reasons, assorted historical and fictional personages are travelling by stagecoach to Varennes; the King, who has fled with the Queen, is also on the road, in a coach ahead of them. And what do the ladies and gentlemen who are trailing behind the King do? For two and a half hours, they look knowingly at each other and talk literately. As the decaying Casanova, Marcello Mastroianni (who is made to look toweringly tall) has a couple of superb moments. Jean-Louis Barrault looks great as the scandalously popular, often pornographic writer Restif de la Bretonne, but the role has been written to make Restif a darling old reprobate, and Barrault just keeps smiling. Also with Hanna Schygulla, Jean-Claude Brialy, and Jean-Louis Trintignant. Written by the director, Ettore Scola, and Sergio Amidei. In French.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; March 12.)

**Out Cold**—Teri Garr is Sunny, who murders her husband. John Lithgow is the husband's business partner, a big, shy dope with a slow-motion brain who thinks he accidentally did the killing. And Randy Quaid is a lunkhead private detective. This trim, smart, evenly paced murder comedy is set mostly in and around San Pedro, California, but the calm with which the young English director, Malcolm Mowbray (who made the 1984 "A Private Function"), keeps everything in check doesn't seem American, exactly. Mowbray's deliberateness has a lunar dimension. The smoothness keeps you giggling. With Bruce McGill and Fran Ryan. The screenplay is by Leonard Glasser and George Malko.—P.K. (3/6/89) (Gemini, and 8th St. Playhouse. . . . ¶ Criterion Center; through March 9.)

**Palm Beach Story** (1942)—One of the giddiest and most chaotic of Preston Sturges's satiric orgies. The romantic problems of the leads (Joel McCrea and Claudette Colbert) get shoved aside by the secondary characters. Sturges's comic invention soars, but the picture is too wild to be sustained; still, it's a joy, despite the lulls of waggish humor. With Mary Astor, Rudy Vallée, and the Sturges stock company, including William Demarest, Franklin Pangborn, and Jimmy Conlin. —P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 12.)

**Pelle the Conqueror**—An aging, weak-willed Swedish widower (Max von Sydow) and his young son (Pelle Hvenegaard) emigrate to Denmark and find work on a large estate, where they're exploited and abused. The boy, more spirited than his father, ultimately escapes. The movie, written and directed by Bille August from a novel by Martin Andersen Nexo, isn't as dreary as it sounds. August directs with great skill and feeling, and the cinematography, by Jorgen Persson ("Elvira Madigan"), is sensational. The images are never simply beautiful—they always carry a strong emotional and dramatic charge. Yet there's a basic dullness in Nexo's material which August can't transcend. For most of the picture's two and a half hours, we're moved and bored simultaneously. In Danish and Swedish.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

**Rain Man**—Dustin Hoffman is Raymond, an autistic savant who lives in an institution in Cincinnati, and Tom Cruise is his huckster brother Charlie, an L.A. car dealer, who kidnaps him, hoping to get hold of some of the three million dollars that their father has left in trust for Raymond's care. Hoffman upstages the movie; Cruise's performance consists of not smiling too much—so as not to distract his fans from watching Hoffman. The director, Barry Levinson, stretches out the scenes until they yawn. But the picture has its effectiveness: people are crying at it. Of course they're crying at it—it's a piece of wet kitsch. With Valeria Golino; Ronald Bass was the principal screenwriter.—P.K. (2/6/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and Loews Paramount.)



*Marlon Brando in "Last Tango in Paris"*

**Stand and Deliver**—Strictly speaking, this educational-inspiration story about a wizardly math teacher in a poor East L.A. high school isn't much of a movie: it's clumsily directed (by Ramon Menendez) and predictably virtuous (it's an American Playhouse production). Yet it's fairly enjoyable—painless, at least. The screenplay, by Menendez and Tom Musca, is based on the true story of Jaime Escalante (Edward James Olmos), who arrived at dispirited Garfield High, which was on the brink of losing its accreditation, and managed to get his students excited about learning his subject—an entire class of these disadvantaged kids eventually took and passed the advanced-placement exam in calculus. Olmos, who's best known as the super-cool Lt. Castillo on "Miami Vice," does a spectacular turn. With thinning hair and a wardrobe of those grotesque shirts that scream "math teacher" to the world, he plays Escalante as a benign psycho, an impassioned nerd whose humor and energy are plausibly inspiring. Also with Lou Diamond Phillips, Rosana de Soto, and Andy Garcia. —T.R. (Eastside Cinema; through March 9.)

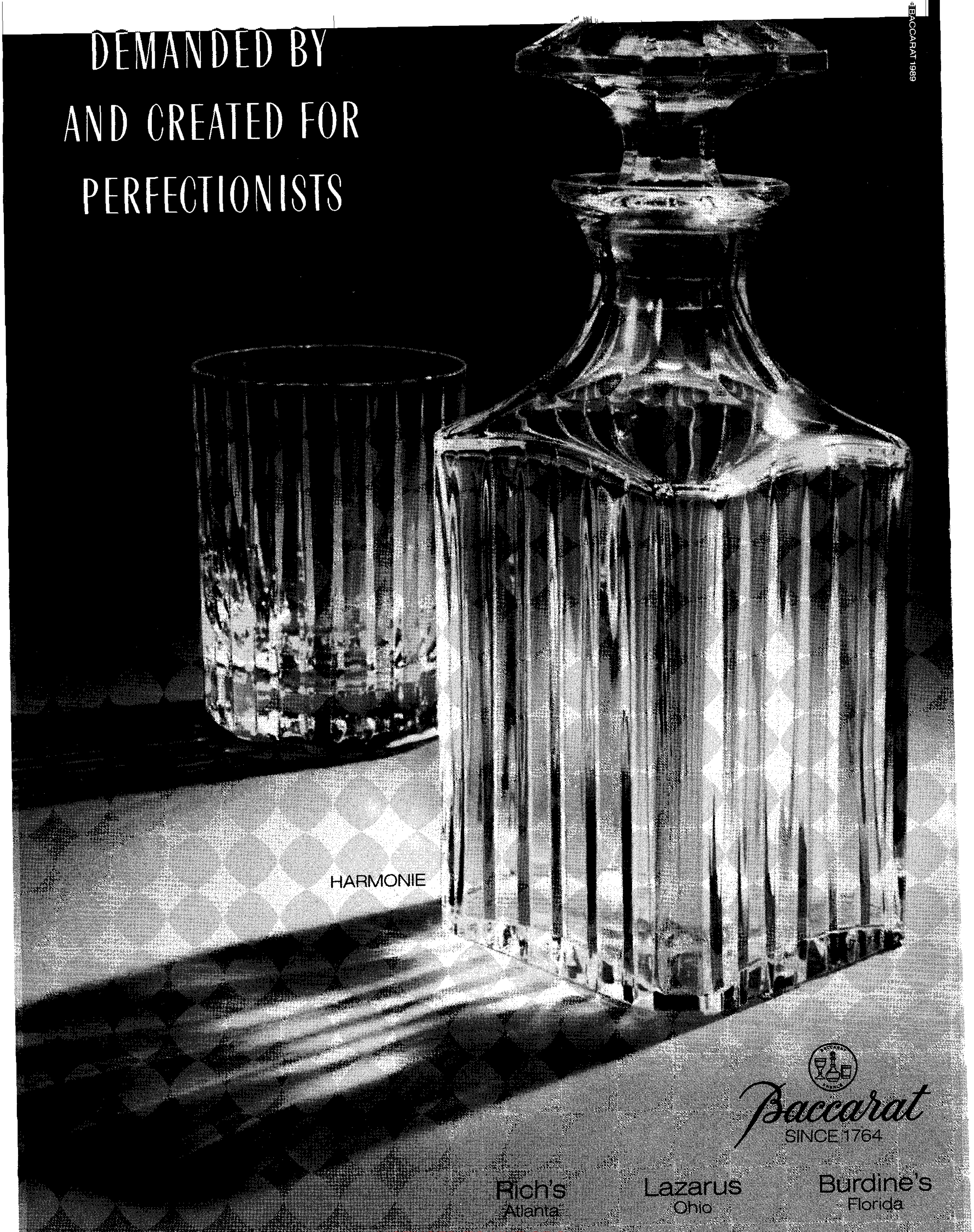
**Tap**—A thirties-style semi-musical with a good strong Cagneyish role for Gregory Hines. He plays an ex-con whose true vocation is to carry on the great black tap-dance tradition founded on jazz. That's Hines' vocation in real life, too, only his way of realizing it on the screen—he hooks up with a rock band and a synthesizer, and his taps go boom—is a lot less controversial than it would be in real life. Written and directed by Nick Castle, Jr., the film is the first to tell us about the black tap community in feature-length fiction terms, and those terms finally defeat it. The numbers are staged in old-movie-musical formats, white folks are everywhere, Harlem doesn't exist. But Hines is liberated, and is exciting for the first time on the screen. With Sammy Davis, Jr.; the young dancer Savion Glover; and, playing themselves, Sandman Sims, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, Harold Nicholas, Arthur Duncan, Steve Condos, and Pat Rico.—A.C. (2/6/89; under Dancing.) (Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gemini, Loews Orpheum, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through March 9.)

**Three Fugitives**—A crumbum farce by the French writer-director Francis Veber, working in this country. (It's a remake of his "Les Fugitifs.") Nick Nolte plays a veteran armed robber who goes to a bank to open an account and is taken hostage by Martin Short, a terrified twerp of an amateur holdup man. He needs money to keep his six-year-old daughter. That's the setup: the three are variously chased, and chase each other. Nolte keeps whamming Short on the head, and the tot ignores her devoted father. He's too small for her. She's smitten by big, blond, blue-eyed Nolte; queasy pedophiliac overtones hover in the air. With Sarah Rowland Doroff.—P.K. (2/20/89) (Embassy.)

**True Believer**—A nifty thriller—fast and tense—about a Manhattan lawyer (James Woods) who was a hero of the counterculture but is now defending drug dealers and getting paid in cash. When he's goaded by his new law associate (Robert Downey, Jr.) into taking on a murder case, his eyes widen at the bare possibility that the man he's defending might be innocent. The movie makes us share the lawyer's energy and charge as he investigates the crime. He doesn't want to sleep: he lives off the excitement of having a cause. It's a pick-me-up of a movie. Nothing great, nothing terribly distinctive, but the aliveness of the texture can quicken your senses and keep you fascinated. Directed by Joseph Ruben, from a script by Wesley Strick.—P.K. (2/20/89) (Beekman, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and Movieland.)

**Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown**—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her longtime live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. Cinematography by José Luis Alcaine. In Spanish.—P.K. (11/14/88) (Cinema Studio.)

**Working Girl**—Mike Nichols made this yuppie Cinderella romance, with Melanie Griffith as Tess McGill, a poor but enterprising girl from Staten Island who fights off the sleazoid bosses and struggles to break through the educational-background barriers and climb from Wall Street secretary to executive. We're supposed to be cheered by watching Tess become part of the establishment. Griffith is very appealing, and she carries what there is of the picture, but this is the kind of star performance in which the heroine's misty eyes and soft-focus smiles (which suggest bleariness) are supposed to turn our brains to jelly. After a bouncy, promising opening, the staging becomes so broad you can't tell whether satire is intended or just dumb jokes. With Sigourney Weaver, Harrison Ford, Joan Cusack, and Alec Baldwin. The script is credited to Kevin Wade.—P.K. (1/9/89) (34th St. East, Waverly, Regency, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Coronet; through March 9. . . . ¶ Baronet; starting March 10.)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THE NEW YORKER

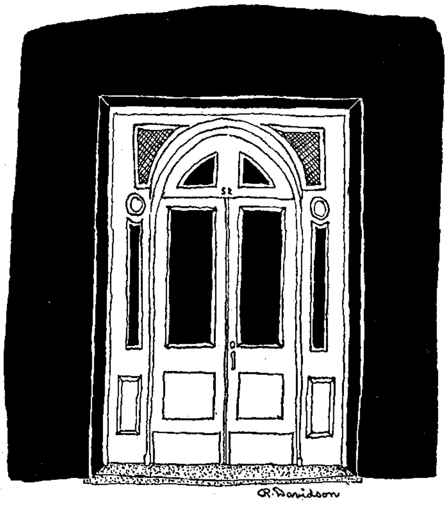
# THE TALK OF THE TOWN

## *Notes and Comment*

AROUND the time of the Inauguration, it was pointed out repeatedly what a fortunate moment this was in the field of international relations. All over the world, there was a softening of hard lines: in the attitude of the Palestinians toward the Israelis; between North and South Korea; between the Soviet Union and China; between the Soviet Union and Israel; and, above all, between the Soviet Union and the United States. Since then, a feeling of anxiety has built up, because President Bush has not yet responded to this state of affairs with policy statements, and hasn't even filled some key posts. He is being hounded in the press for his slowness, and his answer is that foreign policy is not an area to rush into. Brent Scowcroft, his national-security adviser, said that it would worry him if the President *were* rushing in. We agree with General Scowcroft. The world is new. Its deepest structures are melting, and what will replace them is not clear.

From the perspective of the United States, the greatest change is in Mikhail Gorbachev's actions: the withdrawal from Afghanistan, the proposed reductions of both nuclear and conventional arms, and the opening of the Soviet system. These events contrast symmetrically with the period in the early sixties, when Khrushchev was actively testing us in Berlin and then in Cuba. He tested and pushed, tested and pushed—relentlessly, it seemed. And we pushed back. The contests had a heroic quality that intensified our sense of ourselves as the defenders of the free world against a reckless aggressor, but on a deeper level these experiences—in Cuba, especially—shook both nations and led both to seek a stabilized antagonism through equality. From fear, they coöperated to keep themselves stalemated. Out of this came institutionalized fright.

Now Gorbachev is behaving in a way that is the exact reverse of Khrushchev's pattern. In action after action—relentlessly—he seems to be withdrawing from rivalry. Instead of leaning into the stalemate, he seems to be walking away from it. He is reducing danger and taking away fear. This non-challenge challenges us less stressfully but more profoundly than the tense duels with Khrushchev. Those ordeals presented daunting choices, but the choices were concrete and fell within a narrow range. The current situation opens possibilities, where the choices cover a wide range and are, many of them, indefinite and yet to be invented. The face-offs with Khrushchev automatically yielded us a more sharply defined sense of ourselves in relation to a belligerent, untrustworthy Soviet Union. They gave us a gratifying self-image, and an important, dramatic place in the world. In contrast, Gorbachev's actions threaten to deprive us of an identity. Less and less do we have a menacing Soviet Union to provide us with a sense of moral rightness. Without our eyeball-to-eyeball power match, we become less the defender of the free world and more a nation among nations. We lose a role, we lose a script, we lose a language by which we have come to be known to others and to ourselves. Now we have to discover who we are without our aggressive archenemy, against whom we have defined ourselves from the beginning of the nuclear age and throughout our reign as a mature superpower.



It's important to remember that, though these changes began some while ago, it is only recently that they emerged distinctly. Only recently has it become clear that Gorbachev's actions are not just public-relations stunts. Only recently have hard-liners had to fall back on emphasizing the danger that Gorbachev might be overthrown, rather than that he is to be mistrusted. So it's not surprising that the Administration is hesitant and perhaps confused, and that Congress is largely silent. The press, too, seems to be at a loss, using terms like "peace offensive" to report Gorbachev's actions, and thus wrenching events back into the familiar language of bipolar struggle. And it's not surprising that, in the one instance in which some indication of policy was necessary during Secretary of State Baker's trip to Europe, the fact that the West Germans are beginning to feel safe was called a problem (a problem because feeling safe might make them unenthusiastic about updating the nuclear weapons in Germany). It's ironic, but certainly well within the traditional ironies of deterrence which have structured our world view for so long, that the slipping away of danger is now perceived as the danger. Fortunately, unlike the struggle with Khrushchev, in which decisions had to be made within days and sometimes hours, this situation affords time. We have no guarantees for tomorrow, and must, of course, remain alert to all possibilities; we need our old habits of mind in order to foresee danger. But we know that today danger from the Soviet Union is greatly reduced. It makes no sense to pretend otherwise. Furthermore, it is reasonable to suppose that the danger will be reduced still further in the future. Our new President should take the time he needs to understand what that means.

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A BIG city like New York could use at least one good snowstorm every year. A storm is the only event that happens to everybody at the same time, the most sociable event there is—one that pulls all the colorful little stories together into a big black-and-white epic. So the imaginary snowstorm that blew through town the other weekend had a lot of people counting on it, and happily contemplating the trouble it would cause, long before it finally did not appear. We were one of them. We woke up Friday morning to find the *Times* predicting from three to six inches, maybe twelve on Long Island, where "gusts over 50 miles an hour are possible, whipping the snow into high drifts." Our apartment does not have a barn out back, but a sentence like that makes us think we'd better go check on the livestock. We looked out toward where the herd would be if there were one. No snow, but the sky had a grayish, metallic cast that looked pre-stormlike to us. Then a carpenter phoned us and mentioned eight inches. He was supposed to come and install a shelf above the washer that morning, and he called to say he'd be two hours late, because, on account of the big storm, he'd have to come by car instead of bike, and his car was at a garage in Brooklyn having its brakes relined. He did not seem discouraged by the storm's advance. When we mentioned Long Island's twelve inches and wind-whipped drifts, he paused a moment, as Gary Cooper might have, and said, "I'll be there."

We put on warm boots and left for work. We thought we detected in the faces of people on the street and down in the subway a pretty clear mood of storm-readiness—people looking up in the air with a weather eye, bundled-up people bouncing gently against each other on the train. We overheard "eight inches" several times. At the Columbus Circle station, we also heard a woman preaching on the platform. She was short and powerful, and paced to and fro yelling, "There's an express train to Hell, too! Yes! There's a Heaven and there's a Hell! And which train *you* ride? Do *you* know?" She wore a brown parka, a red stocking cap, and mittens.

It was still not snowing when we came up out of the ground at Forty-second Street. We glanced up at the big National Debt Clock recently installed on a wall above the hamburger stand across the street, which showed the debt beating its way toward the three-trillion-dollar mark ("Your Family Share $41,661"). The debt rose all day Friday and the snow continued to not fall, and now it is a week later, our family is deeper in debt, and still no snow, although last Sunday we did see some slanting, slow-falling, semi-crystallized rain in the twilight in Central Park. Some of what was falling seemed to possess particularity and to flutter flakelike as it fell, but when the stuff hit asphalt it was nothing but anonymous water. We were angling across the Park on a long hike back from lunch up in the clouds, in the dining room on the hundred-and-seventh floor of the World Trade Center, where the great, dense, swirling mists seen from a few feet away, over a plate of cold pasta salad and herring in mustard sauce, had storm written all over them, but it was a storm on its way somewhere else.

The woman we were with pulled up her collar and said, "It's cold," which some people would say if a shadow fell on them, but she is from the Midwest, where winter is winter, and, except for the snowlessness, this was the real thing. The wind had an edge to it, the sky was hard. It *was* cold. We heard a faint whine in the air, and our companion said that it sounded like the singing of telephone wires on very cold days when she was a girl walking home from school along a gravel road on the prairie. She had imagined it then as the whine of conversations frozen shut on the syllable "-ing." Nobody was in the Park. "It's too cold to snow," she said. And it didn't. By Monday morning, the six hundred city garbage trucks that were equipped with snowplows had been decommissioned.

We've seen no snow since January, when we were in Chicago, and we feel deprived. In the liturgical year of basic visual images imprinted on a person's mind back in grade school, winter is represented by snow: cottony puffs on pine trees and hills and the roofs of small, square houses. We did not sit around the long library table with paste and crayons and construction paper and make pictures of dusty gray sidewalks with tree wells full of trash, dead grass, and frozen dog manure. That non-storm may have been the city's last chance for snow this winter. Perhaps it was needed here, to teach us something, which now we won't know, apparently.

Winter is a mysterious season. It is less researched than the others, because scientists don't care to freeze, either. They are rationalists, and prefer pleasure to pain; hence the vast shelves of monographs about the gorgeous fish of the coral reefs of Micronesia, the lifeways of tropical peoples, etc., and the few, slim volumes about the frozen tundra. Margaret Mead did not study adolescence in Greenland, and Jacques Cousteau did not steer the Calypso into the Bering Strait in November. They went where it was nice. Television and movie producers don't shoot many pictures in the North in winter, because it's a pain and because cold and snow are ominous phenomena, clear reminders of mortality. So America's popular images of itself are false, meteorologically speaking: a green, sunny land where nobody needs to wear warm clothing—a nation of Pasadena.

A couple of days after the snow didn't fall, we were walking down Fifth Avenue and heard a man behind us say, "There is no such thing as collective intelligence! Ha! It's *individuals* who think. You got to have *individuals* in the collective!" We turned and looked at him, but he didn't look back. He was talking to himself, engrossed in his own company. He snorted. "Collective intelligence! That's a contradiction!" Somehow, we thought, a good storm, with eight inches of snow whipped into high drifts, would have got his attention and drawn him into the epic along with the subway preacher, the carpenter, us, and all the others. But if it can't snow, then at least it can turn to spring. We await the advent of baseball.

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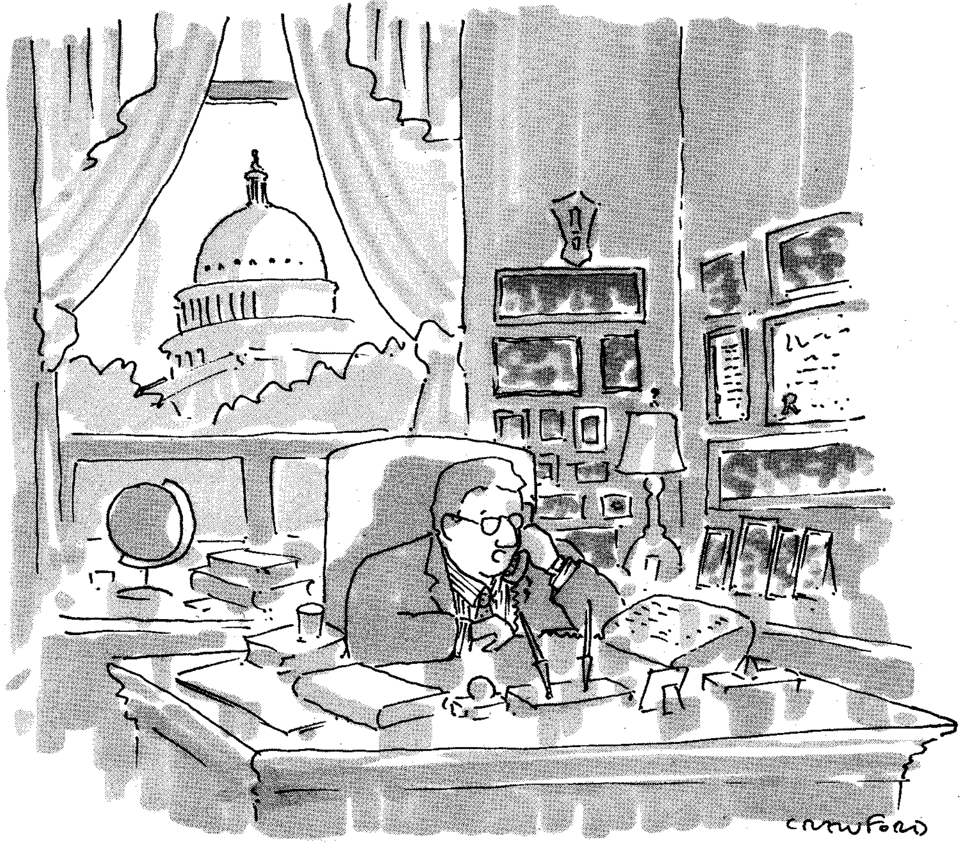

*"Brad? This is your congressman. Get Mommy on the phone, please."*

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## *Nice Psychic*

FOR eleven years now, every Sunday evening at seven o'clock, just as Morris Fonte has appeared live on Channel 17 for another edition of "Tele-Psychic," CBS News has fought back with "60 Minutes." The "60 Minutes" people have resorted to every cynical trick in the hype manual—sensationalism, controversy, hidden cameras, celebrity interviews, glitzy graphics, glamorous newscasters—but they have not been able to prevent Morris Fonte, the creator, producer, and host of "Tele-Psychic," from exercising his awesome mental powers. Along the way, Morris has relied on basics: the unpretentious fixed-camera shot, the hand-painted "Tele-Psychic" poster in the background (images of white-capped blue waves, sun, moon, clouds, and lightning bolt), the folding table, the philodendron, and the black rotary-dial phone. The calls start at six-thirty, a half hour before Morris goes on the air, and they never let up.

At the beginning of each week's show, Morris reminds potential callers that he is available to address their concerns about "love, health, wealth, marriage, career, or whatever." Christian Roebling, who directs "Tele-Psychic" at Metro Access, a studio on East Twenty-third Street, and is well acquainted with the entire lineup of metaphysical talent on Channel 17—including DePrince, the Haitian voodoo priest, who is on every Tuesday evening at nine; Kwaku, the psychic projectionist, Wednesday at ten; and the Mystic Man, the long-haired, black-leather-clad numerologist, Thursday at nine—says, "Morris is one of the really nice psychics. Some of the other psychics, if somebody tries to sneak in an extra question they say, 'No, only one question. That's it,' but Morris gives a caller a little break."

Morris says he is forty-five years old, but he appears to be no particular age. He has a thin mouth, a strong jaw, a substantial nose, and curly black hair that rides low on his brow and gives the impression that it landed on his head inadvertently. At six-fifty-nine one recent Sunday evening, Christian Roebling was in the Metro Access control room, Morris was in the studio, and all the telephone lights were blinking. Christian announced, "O.K., Morris. One minute. Be happy." Sixty seconds later, Morris's serene visage appeared in hundreds (perhaps thousands) of living rooms all over Manhattan.

Often Morris kicks off "Tele-Psychic" with topical predictions, and he did it this evening: Rudolph Giuliani will be the next mayor of New York City; interest rates will come down in the second half of '89; the Dodgers will repeat in the World Series. Sports forecasting is one of Morris's psychic subspecialties. The night before, Mike Tyson had dispatched Frank Bruno with a fifth-round knockout. Some weeks earlier, Morris had predicted a fourth-round knockout—a discrepancy that he now attributed to the differential between "spiritual time and earth time."

The first caller, a woman, was on the line. Briefly, she and Morris discussed the weather (it was raining), and then he said, "O.K. Your question for me?"

"My question is money, financial, and love and marriage."

"Hoo! You want it all, don't you?" said Morris.

"Yes."

Immediately, Morris began to pick up the woman's specific vibrations, which enabled him to come into contact with her aura and allowed him to speak directly to her needs. He advised her to "get that little bit of rest I think you need and be careful with nerves." He told her that her personal finances would start to improve in the second half of the year, that her love life was at a standstill because she didn't socialize enough, and that a deep and meaningful relationship would blossom for her in April. He confirmed her suspicion that the married man she'd been carrying on with was no good for her.

The second caller was a woman whose voice Morris recognized. He told her she was thinking of taking a trip but wasn't really doing anything about it.

"That's right," she said.

"Your social life is next to nothing at this point," he added.

"I know, and my finances," the woman said.

"Yes, that is also next to nothing."

A not so nice psychic might have left matters right there, but Morris endeavors, when possible, to say something reassuring. "Health, I feel, is going to get better," he said.

"Oh, thank God for that."

"Weight, I feel, is coming off."

"Oh, yes, it is."

"And change the glasses."

Because Morris talks to callers over a speakerphone and therefore doesn't have to hold a receiver, his hands are free to knead the air, tap his chest, and massage his frontal lobes. The telephones at Metro Access aren't equipped with a delay mechanism, and this means that anything a caller says goes right out over the air. When, once in a great while, Morris gets a crazy on the line, he cuts off the call and erases its memory from his extraordinary brain. The studio's other facilities are also several degrees below cutting-edge, which eliminates much of the potential for technical failure. For instance, if Christian, in the control room, wants to warn Morris that the time has come to take a break, Morris doesn't receive instructions through a neatly concealed tiny earpiece. Christian simply hollers, "Commercial, Morris!" His voice effectively penetrates the wall, and Morris, in the studio, tells his viewers, "O.K., I think we're going to take a little break. We'll be back in one minute and one half second."

Commercials on "Tele-Psychic" refer to private consultations with Morris in his office, on lower Madison Avenue. Morris's clientele includes "actors, writers, artists, and people in regular walks of life." It is only two and a half years since Morris became a full-time psychic; for about fifteen years, he was a full-time window cleaner who moonlighted as a clairvoyant. There are times when he misses window cleaning—"With that, at least you knew you were getting a paycheck every week"—but the volume of private consultations has steadily improved, particularly since he began accepting credit cards. A half-hour session costs sixty-five dollars, a full hour ninety-five. Morris also offers a fifteen-minute minireading, in person or over the phone, for thirty-five dollars. For twenty-five dollars, he will answer three questions. A couple of times a year—"because I can't do everything for myself"—Morris seeks outside guidance from an astrologer or a numerologist or another psychic. Before long, he plans to begin publishing a newsletter, *Tele-Psychic News: Insights on the World.*

"Good evening, Morris, how are you?"

"Fine, thank you, and you?"

"You look very good. You lost weight."

"Yeah, I lost about fifteen pounds."

"And it shows."

"Boy, before I lost that fifteen pounds it felt terrible, and I had a stomach way out to New Jersey."

"You look adorable, Morris."

"So do you. Mmm-hmm. So, are you going to tell me about your love life now?"

"No, you're gonna tell me."

*"This 'road not taken' where we're going for dinner, was she also a road not travelled?"*

## *Python Scholars*

THE best thing that happened at the Museum of Broadcasting's Monty Python Marathon, during which all forty-five episodes of "Monty Python's Flying Circus" were screened, in two batches, on consecutive Saturdays, was the audience rebellion between Episodes 33 and 34, on the second Saturday. The projectionist started to reshow an episode that, owing to some malfunction, we had seen twice already (Episode 32, beginning with a mock documentary about women against smut in England), and people turned in their seats or rose and shook their fists in the direction of the projection booth, and one woman, her chin outthrust in a credible imitation of John Cleese, rapped on the glass and shouted, "We've seen this one already!" The rebellion was successful. The projectionist halted the offending episode, and soon we heard the familiar strains of Episode 34, "The Cycling Tour," in which Michael Palin, in a purple stocking cap and a backpack with pots and pans hanging off it, cycles from North Cornwall to Smolensk, crashing regularly ("My pump caught in my trouser leg") and faithfully recording the damage ("My sandwiches were badly crushed").

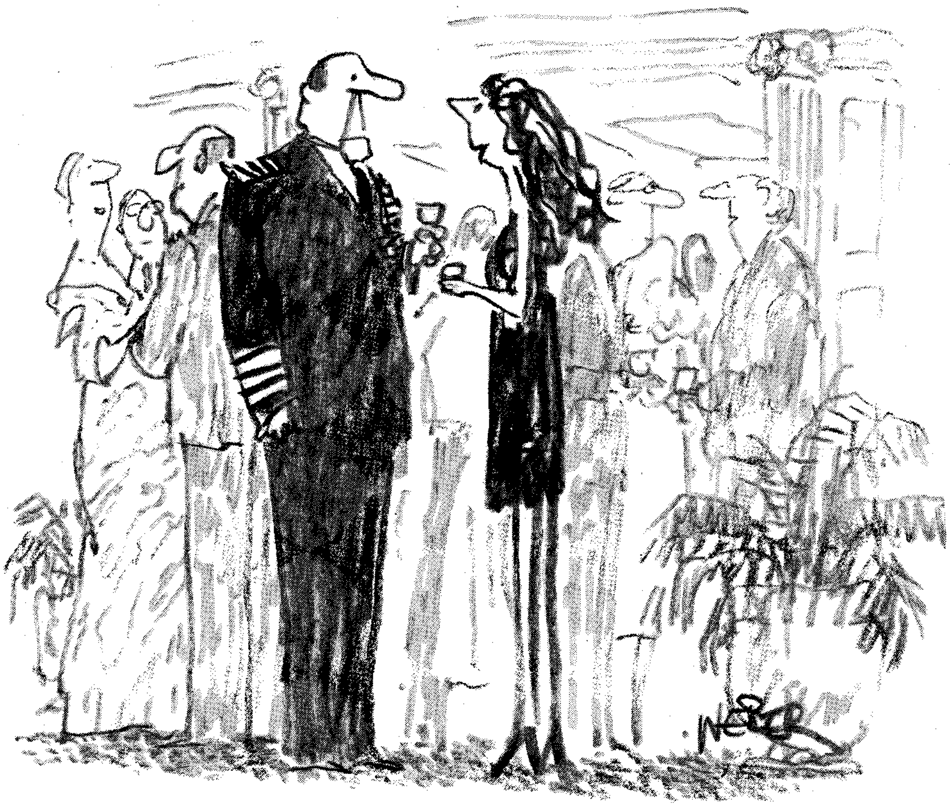
It is as exhausting to watch all forty-five episodes of "Monty Python's Flying Circus" as it is to fly from New York to Honolulu and back with half-hour stopovers in Dallas–Fort Worth, but the Monty Python experience is by far the more deranging. About ten people stuck it out from noon to midnight on both Saturdays, sustaining themselves on hot dogs and pretzels from the man on the corner of Fifty-third and Fifth until he folded his umbrella, around six, and then on illegal Mallomars. (Food and drink are prohibited in the auditorium.) They were an oddly scholarly lot. A bushy-haired young man in suspenders was camped out in the front row with his head bent over his notes the whole time. This was David H. Adler, perhaps *the* Monty Python scholar in America today.

David Adler's notes, on a yellow legal pad, were so detailed that during a segment about a French filmmaker named Longueur he knew what kind of lettuce the woman in the rubbish dump was holding (Webb's Wonder). On the first Saturday of the marathon, the Museum of Broadcasting had tried to slip one past David Adler by substituting Episode 26 for Episode 8, which was missing. Perhaps even a casual fan would have noticed that something was wrong, because the museum's brochure had specified that Episode 8 contained the legendary Dead Parrot Sketch, and there was no dead parrot. A more sophisticated fan might have recognized that Episode 26 belonged to a later period in the Python canon because it contained the Exploding Version of the Blue Danube (da da da dum, KA-BOOM KA-BOOM, da da da da dum, KA-BOOM KA-BOOM) and also the Undertaker Sketch, which took bad taste to new heights. But what aroused David Adler's suspicion was Spiny Norman, a hedgehog who peeked over into a scene at one point and got a laugh. Something was wrong, David Adler reasoned, because Spiny Norman had not been introduced yet. Also, in that episode John Cleese sat at a desk and said, "I'm not simply going to say 'And now for something completely different,' " and up through Episode 7 he hadn't yet said, "And now for something completely different."

At the desk in the lobby of the museum was a document, provided by the Pythons themselves, that listed the contents of each episode. During the breaks, David Adler compared his notes with the official notes. "So far, my notes are pretty good," he said. Then he addressed a young man behind the desk who had been acting as host to the Python fans. "I would like to know one thing," he said. "In my notes 'The Spanish Inquisition' is in Episode 16, and you guys have it down for Episode 15. What I want to know is if you guys made the mistake or they did."

"I don't know," the young man replied. (It turned out that the museum had shown the episodes in reverse order.)

Our own notes have a lacuna between Episodes 14 and 16—we had been laughing for nearly eight hours by then, and still had four to go. We managed to get down verbatim a line from Episode 16 ("Oh, oh, no more buttered scones for me, Mater, I'm off to play the grand piano"), which ought to come in handy sometime, and then our notes deteriorate into disconnected words, like the things you jot down in the middle of the night and can't make head or tail of in the morning. "Semprini," one page says (Episode 17), and "No pooftahs" (Episode 22). On the second Saturday, knowing that the note-taking was in good hands, we took a break after "The Cycling Tour" and went out to cleanse our palate. Probably we should not have been allowed on the street in our condition. We sang the tuba part of the Monty Python theme song while doing our silly walk (Episode 14) to a restaurant, where we barely resisted the urge to order Spam Spam Spam Spam Baked Beans Spam Spam Spam and Spam (Episode 25).



*"I wasn't around for World War II, but I love reading about it."*

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# SATELLITE DISH

IF you think it's too cold for a woman my age to be eating her lunch out here by the beaver dam, then the first thing I have to tell you is, don't worry about me. Or, if I say it the way I first said it as a little girl, "Don't worry 'bout me."

I seem to have been saying and thinking the same things right from the beginning. For a long time my mother would look at me as if the things I was saying were a little bit funny—just a little bit, not funny enough one way to laugh at or the other way to get upset about.

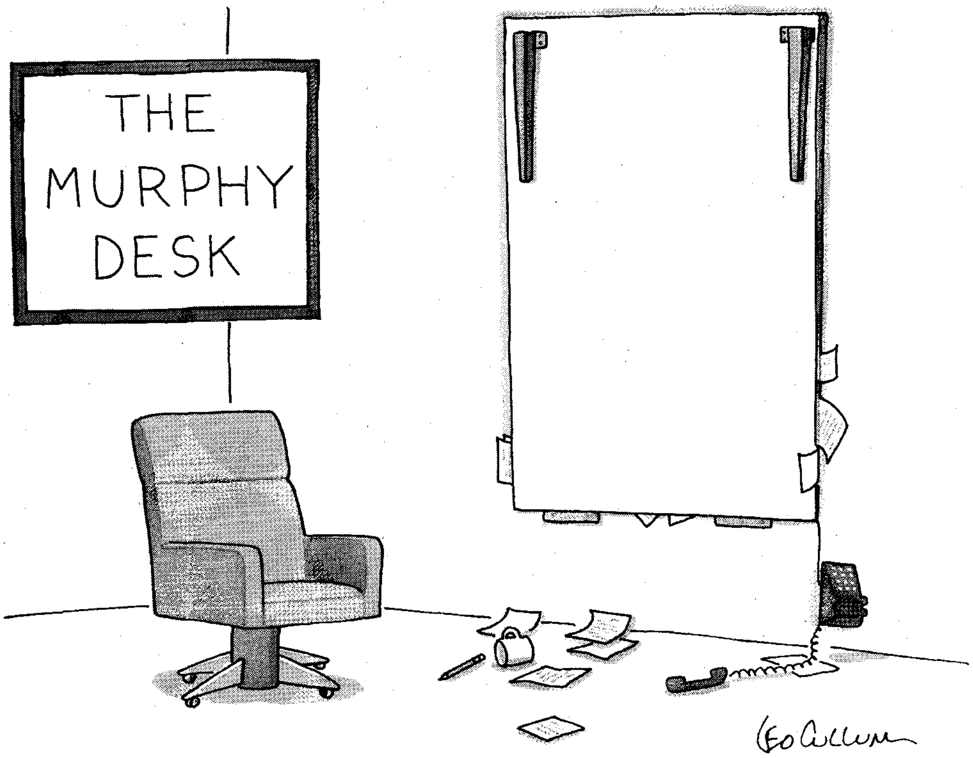
I don't know—is "Don't worry 'bout me" such a funny thing to say if you're a small child? Many times after I'd said it my mother would ask me if I was angry about anything. I told her I didn't think so. Maybe what I should have said to her was that I just didn't like to have anyone worrying about me. But I don't know if I knew that yet. After a while my mother didn't say any more about it, but she would still sometimes look at me closely when I said it, as if she were looking not just into my eyes but into my whole face, if that's possible.

I did start to wonder once if it might have something to do with the trains that used to go by our house—if the things I was thinking and saying might be funny because whenever I asked anyone a question I didn't hear the answer right because just then a train went by.

This is nice and hot, this vegetable soup. I make it with celery, onions, and carrots. Fresh tomato for base. The sandwich I baked the bread for in the wood stove. Now, it might look like that's roast beef in the sandwich, but it's really a thin-sliced leftover from last night. We had steak, with green beans and mashed potatoes, and then apple pie for dessert. I could have brought some apple pie with me today, but there was this nice little piece of angel-food cake.

It wasn't so cold yesterday, but I didn't take my usual walk out here. A rather cheerless day, yesterday. Maybe just because it's the end of the season. Couldn't interest myself in anything—not knitting, not reading, not anything—so I just crawled into bed with my thoughts.

Just as one thing I say is "Don't worry about me," one thing I think is that you love somebody by living with them. Now, my husband—maybe he lived with me because I loved him, and even maybe he lived with me because he loved me, but he never loved me by living with me. Anyway, I was married once, long ago. Three children, two now away.



The satellite dish up by the barn, next to the road, on this side? Hard to miss it. My son, his wife, and the boys watch programs from all over the world now. I really do like living in my own home with family about, yet often when I hear them talking and I think it has to do with people around here but the names aren't familiar and I ask, it turns out to be about something that was on TV. So I do miss out on some talk that way, because I really don't look at the television too often. And if I haven't much interesting to say sometimes, maybe that's why.

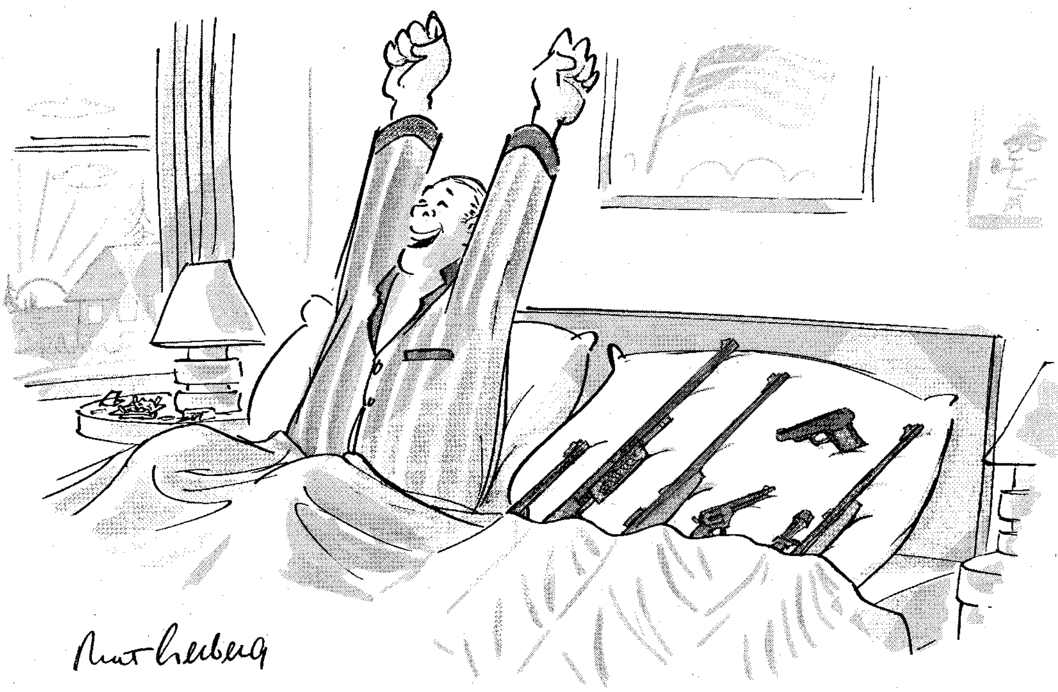
This bread of mine, I think it's very tasty. It's from my grandmother's recipe, though I never knew her. But I do make it like my mother did, not only by the recipe but from having watched her. So it should be the same. And I've started using the wood stove again. So now it's exactly the same.

They say you shouldn't slice bread hot, but my mother would, for me. And now, if anyone's interested, I offer to do it for them. And I do it for myself, too. Because it's always the same for me, that fresh hot bread.

The pond here, that's something that's not the same. More like a lake now. Up at the other end, it's still as good for wading as it used to be, but most times now I'll just sit down at this end and watch the water trickling over the beaver dam. When it's warm enough, I dangle my feet in. And I saw lots of baby beavers this summer—so cute.

Do you think people change? Maybe it's that they appear to—if they really do, I don't know. If it's a sudden change, maybe it's just that they go back to being like they really were all along. If it's a slow change, as they grow older, it's probably just them becoming more like they are—I think people don't get less like they are; they get more like they are. Sometimes the change is toward you. But sometimes it's away. Even if they love you. Even if you love them by living with them.

I like a crusty bread. Last spring, when the man who sold my son the satellite dish told him that the signal wasn't coming in good because of the big old elm tree across the road by the house, that it was getting in the way of the reception, everyone—my son, my daughter-in-law, my grandsons, and then, because everyone else was, even the man—looked at me. I loved that tree. It was always there. It would always make me feel good to walk in the yard through its patterned shadow on my way into the house. But then, across the road, there was the satellite dish. I said they could chop the tree down but I wanted every bit of wood from it cut and stacked in a pile by itself. And though I hadn't done it for years, since we'd got an electric stove and a furnace, I started back using the old wood stove, which we'd left in the kitchen mostly for looks. It's better to cook bread in a wood stove anyway. You can tell the difference not just in the crust but also in taste.



*"Ah, what a beautiful morning to be alive, well, and a member of the National Rifle Association!"*

• •

That elm tree was healthy. Perfect. Solid all the way through. So at least I'm putting it to good use. Even with such a warm summer I did. And I will, until that wood's used up.

Anyway, it's something else to keep me occupied. I do like a full day. That way, when night comes I'm tired and can fall asleep fast. Then morning comes quick. After breakfast, that's when I take my walk down behind the house where the trains used to run. Since they took up the tracks, it's left a nice path. I almost always see rabbits.

THE trains weren't really a good explanation for all those things I was thinking and saying back then and for all these years now, because the trains went by only four times a day, and one of those times I was usually in school and you could hardly hear the train from the school. And two more times I'd be in bed—for the late-night train, I'd be asleep, or almost asleep, and for the early-morning train I'd be just waking up. So unless I was dreaming and asking questions and getting answers in my dreams, and with just one other time of day when the train went by, the things I've always been thinking and saying couldn't have had much to do with those trains. You know, at night, if I think about it, I start to miss the sound of the trains.

What I will miss now, until spring, is people coming up from the city for vegetables and things. Sometimes you meet people who, even though you never saw them before, when you talk to them it's as if they're answering questions inside of you that you don't even ask. People like that I start thinking I could live with.

Some things have happened in my life and some haven't. And I always got along by going carefully—that's even how I have to walk now. But you see a little light and you scratch at it. For a little more light. That's what I do. If you find life a little dark, I think that's what to do. Even if it only amounts to making tea for someone and serving cookies. Any little things I might do to get a little more light—well, I'm not ashamed to do them.

Could be an early cold winter. The moon was getting nice and round last night, so there might be a frost soon. I should cover the tomatoes. I wonder if anyone will remember that I like to take my own apples down to the cider mill to get pressed. Won't make any plans, but I love to go.

Didn't get enough beets this year—enough to eat, but not enough to pickle. Next year, more beets, and maybe more Swiss chard, too. And some flowers closer to the house.

The angel food's gone, so I'll get on my way. You know, whenever I cross the road now, even if I'm looking down just at my feet, I can feel the satellite dish above and behind me where it wasn't before, and the tree and its shadow not above and ahead of me where they were before. All those things seem to make me walk differently—not slower but stiffer.

How would it all look to you after I walked from the beaver dam here, through the field? Up by the road, as you drove over the rise? On the left you'd see the barn, then the satellite dish, then me—don't worry 'bout me—crossing the white line in the road on my way to the yard and the house on the right. But you wouldn't see a patterned shadow of the tree on the house and the yard, and you wouldn't see the tree.

—RICK ROFIHE

•

## LETTERS WE NEVER FINISHED READING

[*Letter to Crain's from Howard J. Rubenstein Associates, public relations*]

DEAR P——:

James Monroe was President the last time there was a breakthrough in the concrete industry.

# THE STYLIST

WHEN they finally reach the dunes, Jann, the photographer, opens a silver umbrella. This is the last shot of the day. The light is rich and slanted. Around them the sand lies in sparkling heaps, like piles of glass silt.

A girl toes the sand. She wears a short cotton skirt, a loose T-shirt. A few feet away from her, the stylist pokes through a suitcase filled with designer bathing suits. The stylist's name is Bernadette. She's been doing this for years.

"Here," she says, handing the girl a bikini. It is made of shiny red material. The girl glances at Jann, who is busy loading his camera. She slips her underpants from beneath the skirt and pulls on the bathing-suit bottom. She is not close to twenty yet.

"Is this the cover shot?" asks the girl, whose name is Alice. Each time she's in a shot she asks this question.

"Where were you two months ago?" the stylist says.

"What do you mean?" Alice's face is diamond-shaped. Her eyes are filled with gold.

"I mean where were you two months ago?" Bernadette asks again.

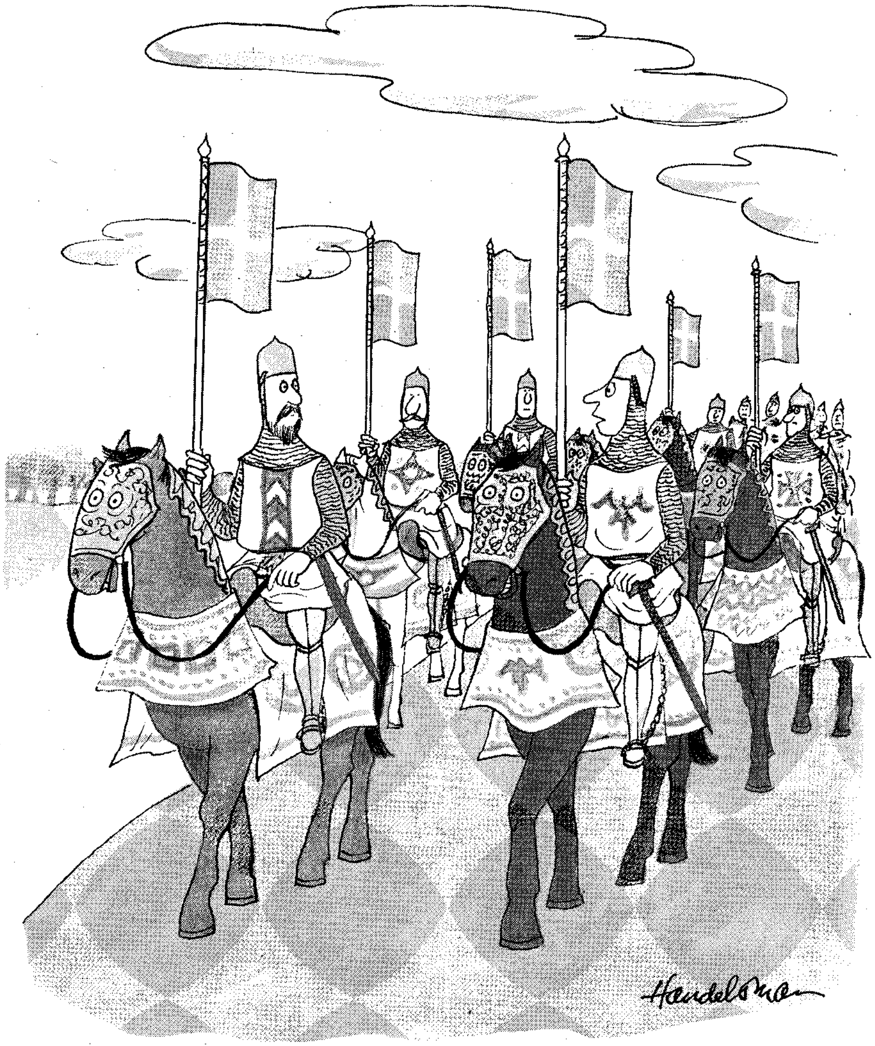
"I was home. They hadn't found me yet."

"Home is where?"

"Rockford, Illinois."

"Cover shot or not," Bernadette tells the girl, "it seems to me you aren't doing too badly."

This takes Alice by surprise. Her mouth opens as if to answer, but instead she turns away and lifts the T-shirt over her head. There is something despairing in the movement of her shoulders. She covers each of her small breasts with half of the red bathing-suit top. Bernadette ties the straps. Alice stares for a moment at the waves, which are pale blue and disorderly.



*"I certainly hope we don't end up offending Islam."*

"Where are we again?" she asks.

"Lamu," says Bernadette.

Hair and Makeup arrive, panting from the walk. Nick, the makeup man, begins to work on the girl's eyes. She hugs herself.

"Where were we yesterday?" she asks.

"Mombasa," says Bernadette.

The photographer is ready. The silver umbrellas are raised to gather the light. He holds a light meter to the girl's chest. Hair and Makeup share a cigarette. There are two other models on this trip, and they watch from a distance. The sea mumbles against the dunes. The girl looks especially bare, surrounded by people who are dressed. She is still so new the camera frightens her. Jann has removed it from his tripod and is holding it near her face. "This face," he says, pausing to glance at the rest of them. "Will you look at this face?"

They look. It is fragile and soft as a newly risen moon. Jann squints behind his camera. The rhythm of the shutter mingles with the breaking waves. Catching it, the girl begins to move.

"There," cries Jann, "that's it!"

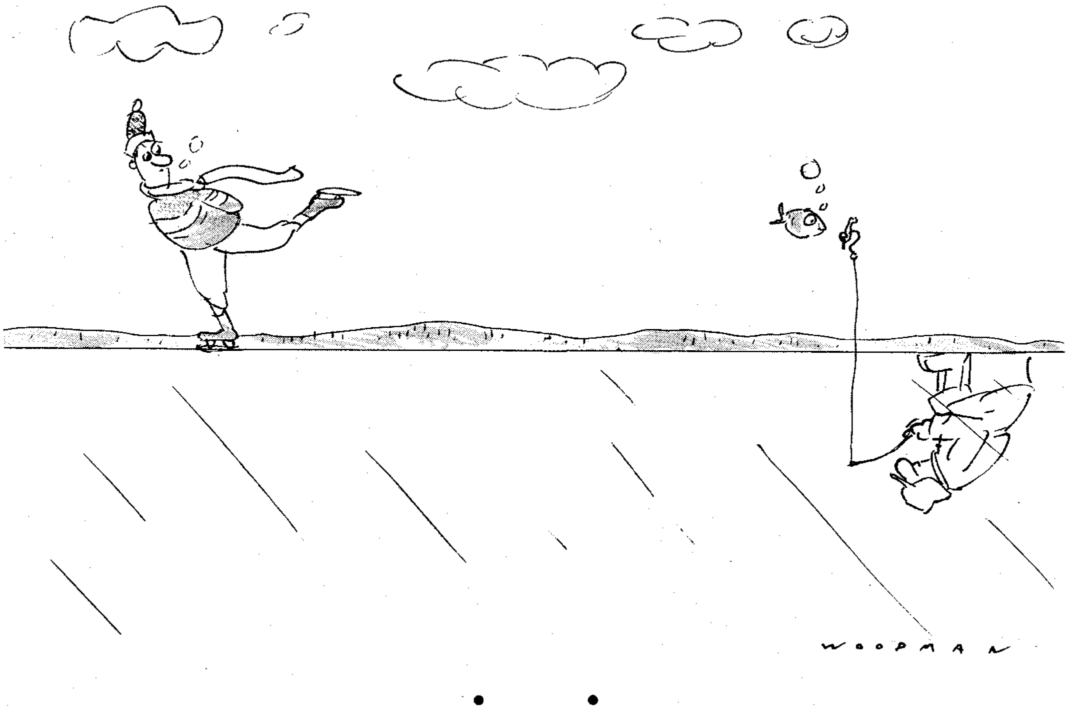
They look again. Bernadette looks and sees it, too, feels the others see it. In the way the light falls there is something; in the girl's restless hands, her sad mouth. A stillness falls. She is more than a skinny young girl on a beach; she is any young girl, sad and long-haired, watching a frail line of horizon. The camera clicks. Then the moment passes.

Alice leans down and scratches at her knee. Bernadette looks at Jann and sees him smiling.

"Bingo," he says.

IN town the wind blows, filling the air with dust and tissue candy wrappers. There are lots of widows in Lamu, old squat women who clutch their dark veils against the wind. In the market square they hunch beside baskets of dried fruit, seeds, purple grain. The air smells burned.

The group is staying in an old two-story hotel near the waterfront—the sort of place that conjures up piano players and rough men toasting their motherlands. It reminds Bernadette of the hotel in New Orleans where she spent her honeymoon. Like that hotel, this place has ceiling fans. Last night she lay in bed and watched hers spin.



After dinner, Alice tells of how she was discovered. It happened at the shopping mall, she says. All the girls walked through. You had to bring snapshots. She had one of herself riding on her brother's shoulders. The two other models look bored with the story.

Bernadette lights a cigarette. She turns to Jann, who is flipping through a magazine. "What does this remind you of?" she says.

He looks up, his blond eyebrows raised. He is gentle and brawny, like a Viking from a children's book.

"What does what remind me of?" he says.

"This. All of us."

Jann seems confused, so she goes on. "Have you noticed how no one really likes each other?" she says. "We're like a family."

He is amused. He takes a long drink of beer and runs his hands through his hair. "Speak for yourself," he says.

Bernadette laughs and then stops. "What's holding us together?" she asks.

"That's easy," says Jann, leaning back in his chair so the cheap wood creaks. "That's a no-brainer."

"Humor me," says Bernadette.

He leans forward, resting his elbows on the oilcloth tabletop. The wind carries snaking bits of music in from the narrow streets. The models have wandered away, and the room is filled with people so black their skin shines blue in the light.

"We're on a fashion shoot," he says. It sounds oddly senseless.

He rolls a matchstick between his palms and then waves at the waiter for two more beers. Flies settle on the table's edge. He looks at Bernadette. "To getting those shots," he says, raising his beer. He sounds uneasy. Bernadette drinks from her bottle, letting her head fall back. Her neck is long and white. Jann watches her throat move as she swallows.

"To the hand that feeds us," she says.

Now the girls gallop over. They want to go dancing someplace. In Mombasa there was a discothèque filled with young African whores who danced languidly and waited for business to arrive. The girls were fascinated.

"Not in Lamu," says Jann. "Remember, there aren't even cars."

Alice yawns openly, like a cat. Her teeth catch the light. She leans down and rests her head on Jann's shoulder. In a helpless, teen-age way she has adored him from the start.

"I'm sleepy," she says.

Jann glances at Bernadette and pulls the girl into his lap. He runs a palm over her soft hair, and she relaxes against him. Her long legs scatter toward the floor. All of them are silent. The girl squirms and moves her head. At this hour two months ago, she would be kissing her father good night. She climbs to her feet. "Well," she says, looking from Jann to Bernadette, "see you tomorrow."

She wanders in search of the other two, who have left her behind.

"Poor kid," says Jann.

As they watch her go, Bernadette reaches under the table and touches him, softly at first, then more boldly. It's amazing, she thinks, how you can just do this to people. Like stealing. Luckily, the youngest girls don't know it.

Jann looks at her and swallows. She decides that he is younger than she thought. She sips her beer, which tastes of smoke, and does not move her hand. "What does this remind you of?" she says.

He shakes his head. Color fills his cheeks.

"Let's go upstairs," says Bernadette.

THEY leave the bar and climb the narrow flight of steps to the hotel rooms. Bernadette presses her palms against the walls. She is drunker than she thought. They pause at the top, where insects dive against an electric bulb. Jann hooks his fingers into the back of Bernadette's jeans and gently pulls. Desire, sour and metallic, pushes up from her throat.

"Your room?" she says.

Jann's bed is neatly made, its curtain of mosquito netting twisted in a bundle overhead. He goes into the bathroom and shuts the door. Bernadette stands at the window. There is no glass, just wood shutters that have been pulled aside to let in the night wind. A bright moon spills silver across the waves. Painted sailboats line the shore.

She hears the toilet flush and stays near the window, expecting Jann to come up behind her. He doesn't. The bed squeaks under his weight.

"You know," she says, still facing the sea, "this reminds me of something."

"Everything reminds you of something," he says.

"That's true. One of these days I'll figure out what it is."

"Any ideas?"

"Nope." She stretches so her stomach pulls. "It must be one of the few things I haven't seen or done."

Jann is silent. Bernadette wonders if he has pulled the netting down.

"Well," he says, "then it shouldn't be hard to spot. When it comes along."

Bernadette lifts off her shirt. Her bra is black, her breasts full and white inside it. There is too much flesh. This has always been the case, but after a day of dressing girls with pronged hips and bellies like shallow empty dishes her own body comes as a surprise. She turns to Jann. "I'll know when I've found it," she says, "because it won't remind me of anything else."

He is lying down, hands crossed behind his head. His photographer's eye is on her. Her body feels abundant, tasteless. She wishes she had left her shirt on.

"If you close your eyes," she says, "you won't know the difference."

Jann shakes his head. The ceiling fan spins, touching Bernadette's bare shoulders with its current. She goes to the dresser and finds scattered change, film containers, a pack of cigarettes. She takes one out and lights it. There are Polaroids: two from this morning in town, another from the docks. She finds one of Alice in the dunes and holds it up. "What do you think of her?" she says.

"Cute," says Jann. "Stiff, though. New."

"She has a crush on you," says Bernadette. "I'm sure you've noticed."

"Poor kid," says Jann. "Should be going to high-school proms."

Bernadette looks again at the picture. Sunlight fills the girl's hair. The sand is pale and bright as snow, the sea turquoise. She longs suddenly to be in those white dunes, as if she had never seen anything like them before. She must remind herself that she was standing just outside the shot, that she chose the girl's bathing suit.

"Have you ever noticed how meaningful these things can look?" she asks.

Jann laughs. "Have I noticed?" he says. "It's my shot."

Bernadette flips the picture back among the others. Her voice goes soft. "I meant in a general sense," she says.

"In a general sense," says Jann, "that's how they work."

The room is filled with stale light. Bernadette goes to the bed. It's amazing, she thinks, how lust and aggravation will combine to push you toward someone. She sits on the bed and then wishes she had headed for the door. She would have liked to make him ask. He would have asked, she thinks.

She stretches out beside him under the twisting fan. It reminds her of a scissors. They do not touch.

"So," she says, addressing the fan, "are you planning to cash in?"

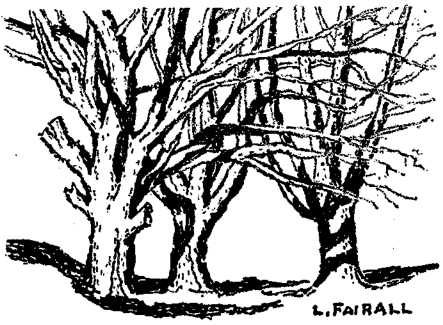
"On what?"

"On Alice."

His arms tense. "Are you always like this?" he asks.

"You bring out my best side," says Bernadette.

She takes his face in her hands and kisses his mouth. The sourness wells up around her gums and teeth. She wonders if Jann can taste it. She presses her stomach against him and works the T-shirt over his head. Undressing a person is easy—she makes a living at it. Jann smells like the beach. His chest is nearly hairless.



"What's the matter?" he says.

His eyes look cloudy and small. He pushes her down and moves above her now, pulling off her jeans one leg at a time. She watches his arms, the same thready muscles and veins she has watched as he held his camera these past days. She probes them with her nails, leaving small white crescents. He doesn't protest. She has him now, she knows it. And yet, she thinks, what difference does it make?

LATER, when they have made love and the sounds of the bar have died down, Jann and Bernadette lie still.

"You know," she says, "this room is a lot like the one where I spent my honeymoon. New Orleans."

"Honeymoon?" he says.

"Sure," she says. "What else was there to do in the early seventies?"

Jann says nothing.

"I was pretty then," she adds. "My hair was down to here."

She turns a little, touching the base of her spine. The skin is damp.

"You're pretty now," says Jann.

"Please," says Bernadette.

## THE ROCKETTES

My mother danced with the Rockettes one spring
just to earn, she said, a little extra
money after her daytime job nursing

the sick in their homes, some of them dying
during the night. They called her Geneva,
who kissed them, danced with the Rockettes one spring.

Each time she locked arms she had a saying,
*Compassed about by so great a cloud . . .*, a
repertoire of greetings, smiles, bows. Nursing

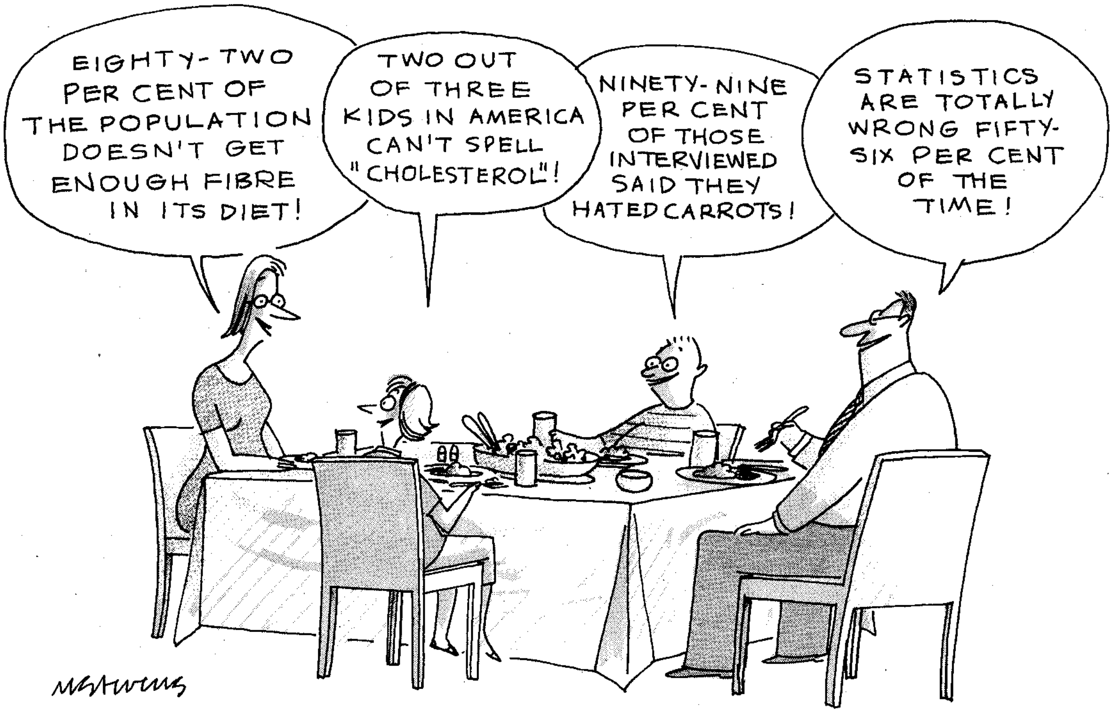
required it, and getting through the evening
knowing *any minute now*. Stamina!
So she danced hard with the Rockettes one spring.

And in Missouri, years later, she'd sing
to the cancan over our wild hurrahs,
lift high her long, lovely legs, old nursing

cap flying, as though she were rehearsing
with her six daughters, who shouted *Vive la
vie!* as we danced like the Rockettes one spring—
breathless, she rocked the baby, flushed, nursing.

—DEBORAH DIGGES

• •


EIGHTY-TWO PER CENT OF THE POPULATION DOESN'T GET ENOUGH FIBRE IN ITS DIET!
TWO OUT OF THREE KIDS IN AMERICA CAN'T SPELL "CHOLESTEROL"!
NINETY-NINE PER CENT OF THOSE INTERVIEWED SAID THEY HATED CARROTS!
STATISTICS ARE TOTALLY WRONG FIFTY-SIX PER CENT OF THE TIME!

THE STAT FAMILY

Jann runs a finger down her cheek.

"Stop it," she says.

"How come?"

"Because old skin always looks tear-streaked."

"How old are you?" he asks.

"Thirty-six."

He laughs. "Thirty-six," he says. "God, what a business we're in."

Bernadette touches her cheek in the place where Jann's finger was. She presses the skin as though searching for a blemish.

"I've been a stylist for sixteen years," she says. "I felt competitive with the girls at first. Now I feel maternal."

"Sixteen years," says Jann, shaking his head.

"They're younger now," she says. "You know that."

"They get older, too. Think what it's like for them."

"Who knows? They disappear."

"Exactly," says Jann.

They lie in silence. Bernadette decides she will go back to her own room. Conversation is meant to get you somewhere, and she and Jann have already been and gone.

"You know," he says, "it's hard to picture you married."

"I hardly was. It lasted a minute."

"How did it end?"

"Christ!" she says. "What have I started here?"

"Tell me," he says.

She narrows her eyes and sits up. With her toes she searches the floor for her sandals.

"You can't answer a simple question," says Jann. "Can you?"

Bernadette touches her knuckles to her lips. The door is ten feet from the bed. She wishes she were dressed.

"I got restless," she says.

"Restless," says Jann.

"Restless," she says. "You know—restless? I kept thinking how many places there were."

Jann laughs. "I guess you picked the right life," he says.

"I guess so," says Bernadette. She fumbles for her lighter. "You know," she says, "you ask too many questions."

She lights a cigarette and smokes it lavishly, sending out plumes through her nose and letting the smoke roll from her mouth. She thinks how much she loves to smoke, how conversations like this would get to her otherwise.

"So," says Jann, as she stubs her cigarette into the half-shell ashtray, "were they as nice as you thought? The places?"

"Sure they were nice. They were very nice. This is nice." She waves her arm at the ceiling. "I've been all over the world," she says. "You've done it, too, right?"

"I've done it, too," Jann says.

She shrugs, then slides her feet into her sandals and lights a last cigarette. One for the road, she thinks.

"My only regret," she says, "is that I hardly have any pictures of myself. All I've got is the shots I styled."

Jann nods. "It's like looking through someone else's photo album," he says.

Bernadette twists around to look at him. He has a sweet face, she thinks. "That's right," she says. "That's exactly how it is."

She stubs out her half-finished cigarette. She wishes she had left ten minutes ago. She will stay another half hour, she thinks.

She lies back down, her body facing Jann's. His shoulder smells faintly sweet, like candle wax. She places her palm on his stomach, but when she tries to move her hand Jann covers it with his own.

"Of all those places you've been," he says, "which was your favorite?"

Bernadette sighs. She is tired of questions. Strangely, she cannot remember anyone having asked her this one before. Is that possible, she wonders. Surely someone asked, surely she had some answer. She tries again to move her hand. Jann holds it still.

"I liked them all," she says.

"Bullshit."

She feels a surge of regret at finding herself still here, at getting caught in this discussion. Jann moves her hand from his stomach to his chest. The skin is warmer there, close to the bone. She can feel the beating heart.

"There must be one that stands out," he says.

Bernadette hesitates.

"New Orleans," she says. "My honeymoon."

It is the only place she can think

of. She feels suddenly that she might begin to cry.

Jann lets her hand go. He turns on his side so they are facing one another. Their hips touch.

"It must be quite a place," he says. His voice is gentle now.

Bernadette moves against him. She cannot stop herself. Jann takes her head in his hands and makes her look at him. "Hey," he says, "what does this remind you of?"

He is playful, teasing. A thin silver chain encircles his neck.

"Nothing," she says. Something is caught in her throat.

For a moment neither moves.

"O.K.," says Jann, pulling her to him. "Here we are, then."

THE next morning they stagger through the dunes, giddy with exhaustion. It is still early, and the light is pale, frosted. It bleaches the waves. Jann is unshaven. Bernadette can't stop looking at him.

They're late. The rest of the group mills restlessly near the shore, turning to check on their progress across the sand. The models' faces look ghostly in this bloodless morning sun. They will probably guess, thinks Bernadette. She hopes they do.

"It's strange," she says. "Going back."

"To them?" Jann gestures at the group. "Or back?"

"Both," she says.

Later today they will fly to Nairobi. Tomorrow morning, New York. Two weeks from now she leaves for Argentina.

"Everything fades the minute you're somewhere else," Bernadette says. It's a mistake to say these things. "It fades."

Jann switches his camera case from one shoulder to the other. The stubble of his beard glints with perspiration.

"Some things have to last," he says, grinning at her, "or there'd be nothing but pictures you styled and I shot."

Hair and Makeup are waving. The others stamp the sand with mock impatience. It is too soft to make a sound.

"They're not enough," says Bernadette.

"No," says Jann. "They're not."

She tries to catch his eye, but he is hurrying. He said it once, she thinks. But she cannot let the conversation go. "It's not enough," she says again.

They reach the group. Everyone eyes them alertly. Bernadette enjoys this attention in a shameless, childish way she cannot remember feeling since high school. There is something thrilling in being wondered about.

The first shot is of Alice. She wears a black one-piece, skimpy, woven with gold threads. It is Bernadette's favorite.

"Better on you than on me," she says, snipping a loose thread. The girl's breasts are so small that Bernadette must pin the suit in back. Alice doesn't smile. Her eyes are funny today, as though she hadn't slept.

Nick, the makeup man, can't put enough shadow on. "You're puffy," he tells her, adding mascara.

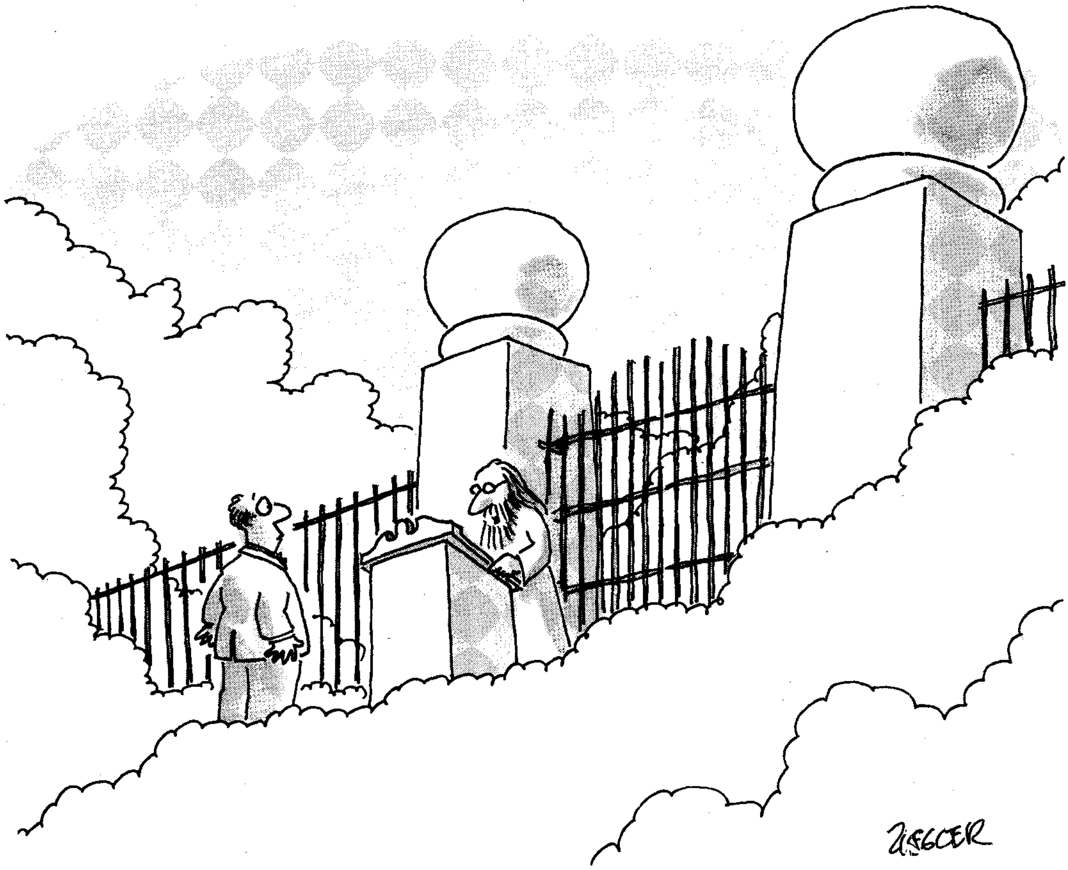
"Puffy." Bernadette snorts. "Wait twenty years."

When Nick is satisfied, Alice goes to the water's edge. The two other models flank her, their backs to the camera. Alice extends her arms slightly from the shoulders, a ballet pose. As Jann begins to shoot, she raises them slowly. Bernadette stands beside Jann. She sees a thin child, a body barely settled in its first frail curves. There is something yielding in the girl's face, something easily wounded. She is looking at Jann.

"More eyes," he says. "Make them harder."

The girl lifts her chin, sharpening the thin line of her jaw. Her eyes are bright and narrow. She looks at Jann and Bernadette with the sad, fierce look of someone who sees a thing she knows she cannot have.

Jann is excited. "Kiddo! You've got it," he cries.



*"The only thing available right now is a handyman's-special starter condo on Tier 19 that's just been reduced to three hundred seventy-five thou, plus maintenance."*

She does, Bernadette thinks. In three years she will probably be famous. She will hardly remember Lamu, and if she runs across pictures of herself on this beach she'll wonder who took them.

When the shot is done, Alice wanders to the water and begins to wade. She still wears the black bathing suit, and standing alone she looks like a teen-ager about to dive in. After dressing the other models, Bernadette follows. There is something she wants to say. She and Alice wade together in silence.

"I want to go home," Alice says. Her eyes are red.

"Twenty-four hours," says Bernadette.

"I mean home home."

"Rockford, Illinois?"

The girl nods. "I'm lonely," she says.

It's amazing, thinks Bernadette, how the young can just say these things. How easy it is.

"We're in Africa," she tells the girl.

Alice shrugs and looks at the shore. Oddly shaped trees rise from behind the dunes. Jann is shooting again. The other models lie stretched on the sand.

"Home never looks so good as when you're in Africa," Bernadette says.

Alice turns to her, squinting in the glare. "What do you mean?" she says.

"I mean you can go home whenever you want," Bernadette says. "No one's stopping you."

The girl fixes her distracted eyes on the horizon. The water looks thick as molten silver. It feels warm against Bernadette's thighs.

"And then you'll be home," she says.

Alice dips her fingers into the water and paints wet streaks along her arm. She looks disappointed, as if she had expected to hear something else.

"But now that you've had a taste," says Bernadette, "you probably won't."

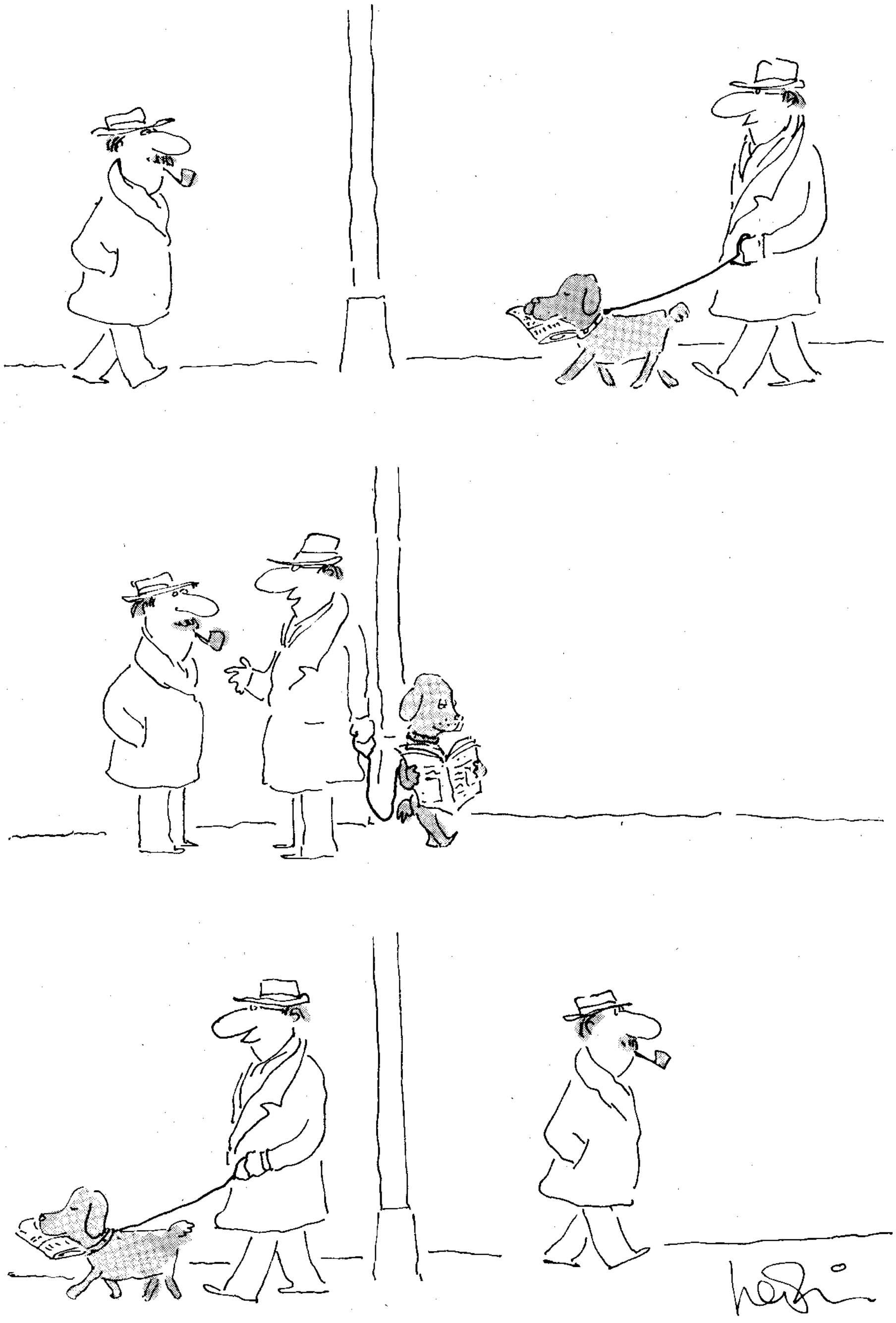
She feels a moment of pride in the way she has led her own life. I didn't go home, she thinks.

"I bet I won't," Alice says.

Something relaxes around the girl's mouth. She looks relieved. It is hard to pass up an extraordinary life.

"Anyway," says Bernadette, "I can cheer you up a little."

Alice shrugs, clinging to her gloom. She is, after all, a teen-ager.



"That shot we just did—that one of you?" Bernadette says. "That was the cover."

The girl runs a hand through her hair. Her lips part, and her eyes fill with tears. She is trying not to smile.

They turn at the sound of voices. Jann jogs toward them with Nick in tow. They have finished the shot.

"I want to get one of you," Jann says to Bernadette. "I'll make you a copy."

Bernadette glances at Alice. The girl has turned away, and her wet hands dangle at her sides.

"Us three," says Bernadette.

Jann hands the camera to Nick. He goes to Bernadette's side, and she stands between him and the girl, one arm around each. She can feel the bones of Alice's shoulders, fragile and warm as a bird's. She brushes a few stray hairs from the girl's face.

"Smile," says Nick.

There is a stillness, the pause of a moment being sealed. Bernadette notices the breeze, the limp water washing her toes. She feels an ache of nostalgia. Jann's hand presses against her back. Between them all is a fragile weave of threads, a spider's web. Bernadette longs for this moment as if it had already passed, as if it could have been. Yet here it is.

—JENNIFER EGAN

# REFLECTIONS

## THE JOURNALIST AND THE MURDERER

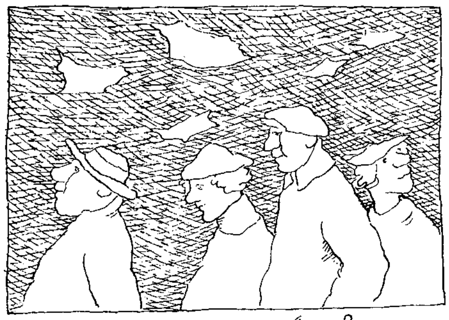
### I—THE JOURNALIST

When we believe any saying whatsoever it be, to be true, from arguments taken, not from the thing itself, or from the principles of natural Reason, but from the Authority, and good opinion we have, of him that hath sayd it; then is the speaker, or person we believe in, or trust in, and whose word we take, the object of our Faith; and the Honor done in Believing, is done to him only.—*"Leviathan," by Thomas Hobbes.*

In some measure it certainly is true, as Locke put it, that men "live upon trust." But the twin of trust is betrayal.—*"Trust and Political Agency," by John Dunn.*

EVERY journalist who is not too stupid or too full of himself to notice what is going on knows that what he does is morally indefensible. He is a kind of confidence man, preying on people's vanity, ignorance, or loneliness, gaining their trust and betraying them without remorse. Like the credulous widow who wakes up one day to find the charming young man and all her savings gone, so the consenting subject of a piece of nonfiction writing learns—when the article or book appears—*his* hard lesson. Journalists justify their treachery in various ways according to their temperaments. The more pompous talk about freedom of speech and "the public's right to know"; the least talented talk about Art; the seemliest murmur about earning a living.

The catastrophe suffered by the subject is no simple matter of an unflattering likeness or a misrepresentation of his views; what pains him, what rankles and sometimes drives him to extremes of vengefulness, is the deception that has been practiced on him. On reading the article or book in question, he has to face the fact that the journalist—who seemed so friendly and sympathetic, so keen to understand him fully, so remarkably attuned to his vision of things—never had the slightest intention of collaborating with him on his story but always intended to write a story of his own. The disparity between what seems to be the intention of an interview as it is taking place and what it actually turns out to have been in aid of always comes as a shock to the subject. His situation resembles that of the subject of Stanley Milgram's famous psychological experiment (conducted at Yale in the early sixties), who was tricked into believing that he was participating in a study of the effect of punishment on learning and memory when in fact what was being studied was his own capacity for cruelty under the pressure of authority. In an ingenious fake laboratory setup, the "naïve subject"—a volunteer who had answered an advertisement in a New Haven newspaper—was told to give an increasingly painful electric shock to a person, presumably another volunteer, in response to every wrong answer to a test question. In "Obedience to Authority," his book about the experiment, Milgram writes of his surprise at the large number of subjects who obeyed the experimenter, and kept on pulling the lever even though the receiver of the shocks was screaming with pain—or, rather, with simulated pain, since the whole thing was rigged: the electrical apparatus to which the victim was strapped was a stage prop, and the victim himself was an actor. Milgram's idea had been to see how ordinary Americans would behave when put in a situation roughly comparable to that of the ordinary Germans who were ordered to participate actively in the destruction of the Jews of Europe. The results were not encouraging. Although a few subjects refused to go on with the experiment at the first sign of distress from the victim, most subjects docilely continued giving shock after shock. However, Milgram's chilling findings are not the point. The point lies in the *structure* of the situation: the deliberately induced delusion, followed by a moment of shattering revelation. The dizzying shift of perspective experienced by the subject of the Milgram experiment when he was "debriefed," or "dehoaxed," as Milgram calls it, is comparable to the dislocation felt by the subject of a book or article when he first reads it. The subject of the piece of writing has not suffered the tension and anxiety endured by the subject of the "Eichmann experiment" (as it has been called)—on the contrary, he has been on a sort of narcissist's holiday during the period of interviews—but when the moment of peripeteia comes, he is confronted with the same mortifying spectacle of himself flunking a test of character he did not know he was taking.



However, unlike the reader of "Obedience to Authority," with whom Milgram shares the technical details of the deception, the reader of a work of journalism can only imagine how the writer got the subject to make such a spectacle of himself. The subject, for his part, is not likely to supply the answer. After his dehoaxing, he tends to pick himself up and walk away from the debacle, relegating his relationship with the journalist to the rubbish heap of love affairs that ended badly and are best pushed out of consciousness. Occasionally, a subject will have become so enmeshed with the journalist that he cannot let go of him, and long after the galling book has been remaindered the relationship is maintained through the interminable lawsuit that the subject launches to keep the writer bound to him. Yet even here the journalist's perfidy is not exposed, for the lawyer who takes the subject's case translates his story of seduction and betrayal into one or several of the conventional narratives of libel law, such as defamation of character or false statement of facts or reckless disregard of the truth.

IN the summer of 1984, a lawsuit was filed by a subject against a writer in which, remarkably, the underlying narrative of betrayed love was not translated into any of those conventional narratives but, rather, was told straight—and, moreover, told so compellingly that at trial five of the six jurors were persuaded that a man who was serving three consecutive life sentences for the murder of his wife and two small children was deserving of more sympathy than the writer who had deceived him.

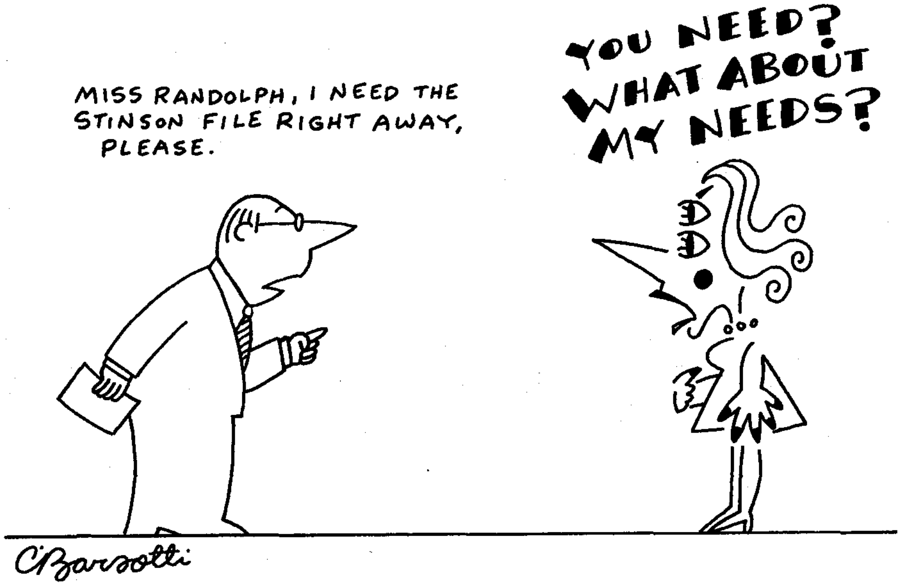
I learned of the case only after the trial had ended, when I received a letter, dated September 1, 1987, from a certain Daniel Kornstein. The letter—which had been sent to some thirty-odd journalists throughout the country—began:

> I am the lawyer who defended Joe McGinniss, author of "Fatal Vision," in a six-week jury trial recently concluded in Los Angeles. As you may know, the suit was filed by convicted triple murderer Jeffrey MacDonald, the subject of McGinniss's book.
>
> The trial ended in a hung jury. Although the plaintiff recovered nothing, the possibility of a retrial means that in a very real sense the issues raised by the trial are still alive, open, and undecided. Indeed, one of the jurors—who admitted she had not read a book since high school—was reported to have said afterwards that she would have awarded "millions and millions of dollars to set an example for all authors to show they can't tell an untruth" to their subjects.

Kornstein went on to characterize the suit as an attempt "to set a new precedent whereby a reporter or author would be legally obligated to disclose his state of mind and attitude toward his subject during the process of writing and research," and to speak of the "grave threat to established journalistic freedoms" that such a precedent would pose:

> For the first time, a disgruntled subject has been permitted to sue a writer on grounds that render irrelevant the truth or falsity of what was published.... Now, for the first time, a journalist's demeanor and point of view throughout the entire creative process have become an issue to be resolved by jury trial.... The MacDonald claim suggests that newspaper and magazine reporters, as well as authors, can and will be sued for writing truthful but unflattering articles should they ever have acted in a fashion that indicated a sympathetic attitude toward their interview subject.

With his letter Kornstein enclosed transcripts of the testimony of William F. Buckley, Jr., and Joseph Wambaugh, who had appeared as expert witnesses for the defense, and excerpts from his own closing statement, "in which I tried to stress the gravity and scope of this new threat to freedom of expression." He concluded, "Joe McGinniss and I both feel that the danger is sufficiently clear and present as to warrant your close attention and concern."


MISS RANDOLPH, I NEED THE STINSON FILE RIGHT AWAY, PLEASE.
YOU NEED? WHAT ABOUT MY NEEDS?
CBarsotti

I took Kornstein's bait—I don't know if any of the other journalists he wrote to did—and a few days later I was driving up to Williamstown, Massachusetts, to talk to Joe McGinniss at his house there. I looked forward to the interview, which would be the first of a series of tape-recorded conversations that McGinniss and I had arranged to have over the next few weeks. I had never interviewed a journalist before, and was curious about what would develop between me and a journalistically knowledgeable, rather than naïve, subject. Here, clearly, there would be none of the moral uneasiness that the naïve subject all but forces the journalist to endure as the price of his opportunity to once again point out the frailty of human nature. McGinniss and I would be less like experimenter and subject than like two experimenters strolling home from the lab together after the day's work, companionably thrashing out the problems of the profession. The tape recorder would preserve the trenchant things we would say; nobody would "do" anything to anyone. The conversation would be serious, on a high level, maybe even lively and witty.

It did not work out that way. McGinniss refused the role of co-experimenter, preferring to play the role of subject. After the first hour of the five hours we spent together, I stopped struggling to preserve my scenario of elevated talk between confrères and gave in to McGinniss's imperative that we play the old game of Confession, by which journalists earn their bread and subjects indulge their masochism. For, of course, at bottom, no subject is naïve. Every hoodwinked widow, every deceived lover, every betrayed friend, every subject of writing knows on some level what is in store for him, and remains in the relationship anyway, impelled by something stronger than his reason. That McGinniss, who had interviewed hundreds of people and knew the game backward and forward, should nevertheless exhibit himself to me as a defensive, self-righteous, scared man only demonstrates the strength of this force. Near the end of the day, he told me of a dream he had had the night before: "I was back in the courthouse in L.A. There was a second trial. I said, 'No, this can't be happening. I'm not ready for this yet, it's too soon, I haven't recovered from the first trial yet.' When I woke up this morning, my amateur analysis of the dream was that it was about my talking to you today. This would be the new trial. It didn't seem very subtle. The message was right on the surface." At six o'clock, the tape recorder clicked, and though McGinniss sat waiting for me to put in a new tape I decided to bring the interview to an end. When, two days later, he called to cancel our future interviews and to say "I want to put all this behind me," I was not surprised, and rather relieved: I had begun to sense that McGinniss's confession to me was not a new one. Someone had been there before me, and something was being repeated with me. A few weeks later, upon reading the transcript of the MacDonald-McGinniss trial, I knew who and what it was. What McGinniss had not yet recovered from—what he had no doubt been helplessly reliving in his imagination during his meeting with me—was a four-and-a-half-day interrogation by Gary Bostwick, the plaintiff's lawyer. Bostwick had mauled McGinniss until there was little left of him. What McGinniss had gone through at the trial was what one goes through in those nightmares of being found out, from which one awakens with tears of gratitude that it is just a dream. Only the most hardhearted person could read the transcript of Bostwick's examination without feeling pity for McGinniss. But even the staunchest defender of a journalist's right to do his work in whatever unpleasant way he chooses cannot but wonder how McGinniss could have been so imprudent as to leave behind—in the form of some forty letters to MacDonald—a written record of his bad faith.

## STARS

Luminous. Ancient.
Itching to farm out a little advice

And no shock the intergalactic patois is English,
The supportive murmur of Perseus and Cassiopeia laced with respect.

We call to them fondly from our rustic campground
For failed romantics.

Distance only adds to their pristine character
And the tango of helium to their physical charm.

One suspects the pharmaceuticals of love and hate
Are remote to them but the urgency of pain very near,

And that somewhere behind those polished exteriors
Is a gilt warehouse of Cole Porter tunes.

Can they distinguish us from trees and small statues?
Or when we're asleep from park benches and snakes?

What are the odds that they care at all?
Slim, but nothing dissuades us.

All over the planet our gratitude rises,
Turning into ghosts and finally heat as it ascends

To that all-night café at the corner of eon and ion
Where the waitresses all look like Mom,

Where everything forgets why it came by the time it arrives
—Like Uncle M., who used to borrow the vacuum

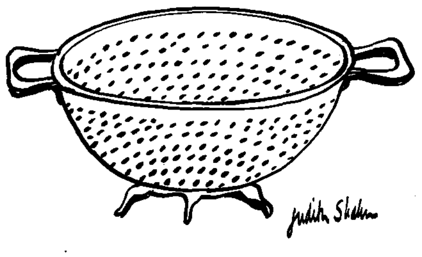
As an excuse to visit and stay on for a meal or two,
His every move a code for fidelity.

—Vickie Karp

• •

McGinniss is forty-six years old and has published six books, the most recent being "Blind Faith," of earlier this year. The first, "The Selling of the President, 1968," written when he was twenty-six, brought him immediate fame and acclaim. In the 1968 Nixon-Humphrey campaign, he had penetrated the inner councils of the advertising agency hired by Nixon, and in his book he revealed the techniques by which Nixon had been made to appear less awful on television. This was in the early days of television's use in politics, and McGinniss's revelations (today very tame) seemed startling and ominous. The defeated Humphrey was quoted on the book jacket as saying, "The biggest mistake in my political life was not to learn how to use television," and "I'm fighting packaged politics. It's an abomination for a man to place himself completely in the hands of the technicians, the ghost writers, the experts, the pollsters and come out only as an attractive package."

During our talk, McGinniss spoke of how he had come to write "The Selling of the President," and surprised me when he said that he had first taken his idea of reporting a Presidential-advertising campaign to the Humphrey camp. "Humphrey's people said, 'Are you crazy? This is all secret. The public shouldn't know about this. No way.' Humphrey's advertising agency was Doyle Dane Bernbach, a very sophisticated group who recognized right up front that a book calling attention to the process would not be in their best interest, so they wouldn't give me any access at all. Nixon's people were almost touchingly naïve. They said, 'Oh, gosh, really—a book? Yeah, sure.' These were people who had had very little experience of being written about." Then, as if the ghost of Bostwick had just appeared at his side, McGinniss added, "But I hardly felt the obligation to say when I arrived at their offices every morning, 'Gentlemen, I must again remind you that I'm a registered Democrat who plans to vote against Mr. Nixon, and that I think what you're doing—which is trying to fool the American people—is sinister and malevolent, and that I intend to portray you in terms that you are not going to find flattering.' I felt no obligation to make that statement. And when they were talking about what they were doing and turned to me and said 'What do you think of that?'



I'd say 'Yeah, that looks good' if I thought it was done effectively. I was trying to make myself as unobtrusive a presence as possible. And when the book was published they reacted with outrage or wry amusement, depending on their sense of humor or their degree of passion as Nixonians. But in no case did anyone think he could sue because he had been defrauded into believing I was going to do something other than what I did."

McGinniss's next book was a novel, "The Dream Team," which was a critical and commercial failure. Then, in 1976, he published a curious book called "Heroes." It is a confessional work that—like many such exercises—confesses something different from what the confessor thinks he is confessing; by making himself into a subject, the autobiographer sets himself up for a betrayal no less profound than that invited by the subject of someone else's writing. "Heroes" juxtaposes chapters about (among other personal matters) McGinniss's inability to be nice to his girlfriend, Nancy Doherty (now his second wife), because of the guilt he feels over leaving his wife and three children, with chapters about meetings with public figures such as Eugene McCarthy, Ted Kennedy, Daniel Berrigan, George McGovern, William Westmoreland, and William Styron, who disappoint him, and confirm him in his notion that there are no heroes left in the world. Before his meeting with McCarthy, over lunch at Toots Shor's, McGinniss rehearses his lines:

> What I wanted to say to him was: "Look. Once you were at the center of things. Everything revolved around you. You had squeezed your whole universe into a ball and had held it in your hands and no one could touch it. Now it's gone. The moment has passed. It won't be back." I wanted to say also that once I had been at the center of things: at twenty-six I had written a book which had become the best-selling nonfiction book in America. It had got good reviews almost everywhere. It was deemed important, and, as its author, so was I. The youngest person ever (I was told) to have written a book that became number one on the New York *Times* best-seller list. Not counting Anne Frank. Then the moment had passed. In many ways, as McCarthy had seemed to, I had tried to make it pass. Part of him had needed to not win. Part of me had needed to not succeed. . . . Now, I wanted to ask Eugene McCarthy, *What happens next? Where is the center of things? Why didn't we stay there? Will we ever be there again?*

McCarthy disappoints McGinniss by being reserved and opaque. He is "not a man inclined toward quick intimacy," McGinniss reports, and, to avoid a drinking expedition that McGinniss organizes when Howard Cosell turns up at the restaurant, McCarthy slips away while McGinniss is in the men's room. Ted Kennedy is similarly elusive. In Berrigan, McGinniss finds the expansive interlocutor he has been seeking, but the morning after their boozy late-night conversation McGinniss opens the notebook in which he inscribed Berrigan's aperçus, and instead of "the disciplined, accurate notes of a trained professional" he finds only illegible scrawls and the punch line of a coarse joke. With one striking exception, the stories McGinniss tells on himself in "Heroes" are pretty unsurprising. The exception is an extraordinary incident that takes place at ten-thirty in the morning in the kitchen of William Styron's house on Martha's Vineyard, where McGinniss has spent the night—most of it sitting up and drinking with Styron, whose book "Lie Down in Darkness" he had read four times. McGinniss writes:

> I woke up at ten-thirty, if not still drunk, then not yet quite sober. The morning was murky and wet. Styron was still sleeping. I went down to the kitchen looking for something to eat. I opened the refrigerator. The first thing I saw was the can of fresh, vacuum-packed crabmeat, which had been shipped up from Georgia. He had told me about this crabmeat in some detail the night before. It was the only canned crabmeat in America, he had said, which tasted like fresh crab. This was due to the vacuum-packing, he had explained. It was very expensive crabmeat and extremely hard to get, and it was one of his favorite things to eat. He had been saving this can for a special occasion, because it was the last he would be able to get until the following summer.
>
> I opened it. It made a hissing sound, like a can of peanuts, or tennis balls. I ate a piece. It was delicious. Moving quickly to his pantry I took out some flour. Then some Tabasco, and Worcestershire sauce. Then I took eggs, milk, heavy cream, butter, and green peppers from the refrigera-

HARRY WILDENTOTT
THE KING OF BROADLOOM CARPETING

*"Your Majesty."*

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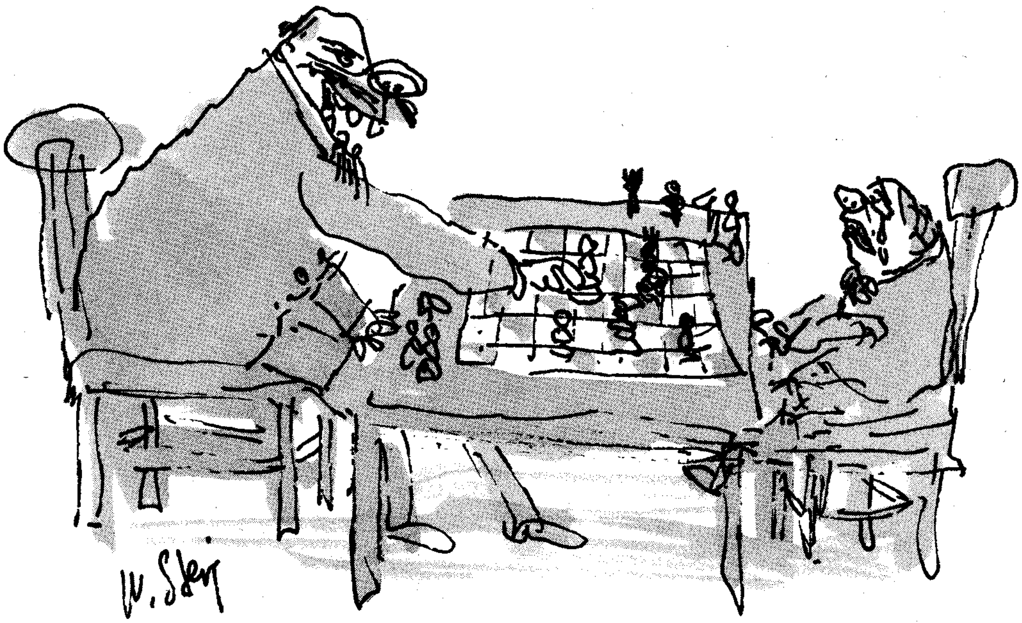


*The Prodigy Is Mated*

• •

> tor. Then I made bread crumbs. I had to move fast. I had to get this done before he woke up. I mixed, rolled, measured, stirred, and poured, for twenty minutes. Then I put the whole business in the oven. It would be crabmeat pie: an original recipe. It would be delicious. How could it miss? I had used the whole big can of crabmeat.

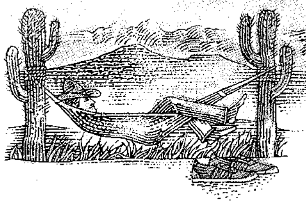
Styron appears in his bathrobe, and when he learns what McGinniss has done he is unbelieving, then outraged. "You used *that* crabmeat?" Styron says, and McGinniss goes on, "It was as if he had come upon me making love to his wife. 'I didn't expect you to do this,' he said." The story ends happily—Styron regains his good humor and geniality when he eats the crabmeat pie and finds it delicious—and lamely. For what the incident is about, what lies below its light surface, is the dire theme of Promethean theft, of transgression in the service of creativity, of stealing as the foundation of making. That McGinniss is rewarded, rather than punished, for his theft confuses the issue. Yes, a subject may occasionally grudgingly concede that what has been written about him isn't bad, but this doesn't make the writer any less a thief. The rare, succulent crabmeat, picked out of the shell, packed, sealed, refrigerated, jealously hoarded, is like the fragile core of a person's being, which the journalist makes away with and turns into some horrid mess of his own while the subject sleeps. ("That crabmeat has a very delicate flavor," poor Styron whimpers on hearing of McGinniss's Tabasco and Worcestershire sauce and bread crumbs and heavy cream.) When McGinniss wrote this chapter, he could hardly have known that someday he would be in a courtroom in California having his liver ravaged by a pitiless lawyer. Or did he write those letters to MacDonald to make sure that such a fate would be his?

McGinniss met MacDonald in June, 1979, in Huntington Beach, California. McGinniss had just finished "Going to Extremes," a work of reportage about Alaska that was to restore to him the reputation he had lost with "The Dream Team" and "Heroes," and establish him as a humorist of no inconsiderable gifts. He was in California as a visiting columnist for the Los Angeles *Herald Examiner*, writing a column of light, sharp commentary. However, the meeting with MacDonald put a halt to McGinniss's traffic with comedy, and brought him to a genre—the "true-crime novel"—in which he had never worked. Fortunately for him, the books of this genre published in America today apparently need to fulfill only one requirement—that they be interminably long—and when "Fatal Vision," the true-crime novel McGinniss eventually wrote, weighed in at six hundred and sixty-three pages it insured for itself the place on the best-seller list that its publishers had anticipated when they gave him a three-hundred-thousand-dollar advance.

McGinniss was led to his subject by an item he read while scanning the Los Angeles newspapers for topics for his column: the Long Beach Police Officers Association was sponsoring a dinner dance to raise funds for the legal defense of Jeffrey MacDonald, a local physician, who was about to be tried for murder. McGinniss remembered the crime, which had occurred nine years earlier. On February 17, 1970, MacDonald's pregnant wife, Colette, aged twenty-six, and his two daughters, Kimberly and Kristen, aged five and two and a half, were bludgeoned and stabbed to death in the family's apartment at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where MacDonald was serving as a doctor in a Green Beret unit. MacDonald was charged with the murders and then cleared by an Army tribunal. But his story about waking up to the screams of his wife and older daughter and about seeing four intruders—three men holding clubs and knives and a woman with long hair holding a candle and chanting "Acid is groovy" and "Kill the pigs"—led to no arrests, and continued to raise the question of why no traces of the intruders were found in the apartment, and why MacDonald was merely knocked unconscious and slightly cut up when his wife and children were savagely done to death. In response to pressure from Alfred Kassab, the stepfather of the murdered woman, the Justice Department revived the investigation in 1971 and, over a period of years, built up a compelling enough case against MacDonald to bring him to trial. In the intervening eight years, MacDonald had moved to California, and had made a life for himself that appeared to be shadowed neither by the loss of his family nor by the cloud of suspicion that had hung over him from the day of the murders. He had not remarried and

# Meanwhile Back At The Ranch.

We're doing leaner breeding and skinnier feeding. And nobody's doddering in the kitchen. Because all it takes to cook a sirloin is a few minutes and a little fire. And you can do a roast so fast it'd make your grandma spin. See, just because we've been so busy back at the ranch doesn't mean you have to be so busy back in the kitchen.



### *STRAY COOKING TIPS.*

*1. If you're concerned about fat, check the "Skinniest Six" below. 2. Great marinades come disguised as vinaigrette, yogurt or red wine. 3. Leftover steak is the ultimate cold cut.*

### *MEANWHILE BACK AT THE STOVE.*

*You can cook a steak even if you haven't got a weekend or a grill. Just sear both sides in a hot iron skillet. You get the speed. You get the ease. And most important, you get the steak.*

### *FAST FORWARD ROAST BEEF.*

*You don't have to drive 200 miles to grandma's house just to have roast beef. Ask any microwave cookbook. About 20 minutes a pound is all it takes. Regular ovens can do it in about 30 minutes a pound. And leaner roasts cook faster. Which leaves you with plenty of time to call grandma after dinner.*

### *THE GREATNESS OF SMALLNESS.*

*The sirloin that touched both ends of the plate has been fajita'd and it's been tossed. It's been stir-fried and it's been skewered. Because small amounts of beef are hugely interesting.*

*Figures are for 3-ounce servings, cooked and trimmed.**
*© 1988 Beef Industry Council and Beef Board*

| ROUND TIP | TOP LOIN | TOP ROUND | EYE OF ROUND | TENDERLOIN | SIRLOIN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.4 gms total fat* | 7.6 gms total fat* | 5.3 gms total fat* | 5.5 gms total fat* | 7.9 gms total fat* | 7.4 gms total fat* |
| (2.3 gms sat. fat) | (3.0 gms sat. fat) | (1.8 gms sat. fat) | (2.1 gms sat. fat) | (3.1 gms sat. fat) | (3.0 gms sat. fat) |
| 162 calories | 172 calories | 162 calories | 155 calories | 174 calories | 177 calories |

## Beef.
Real Food For Real People.

Source: U.S.D.A. Handbook No. 8-13

was leading a pleasant, blameless life in the California style. He was a hardworking, successful physician—he had become director of emergency medicine at St. Mary's Hospital, in Long Beach—and he lived in a small, attractive condominium apartment on the water, to which he liked to bring friends and girlfriends, often entertaining them with rides in his thirty-four-foot boat named (what else?) the Recovery Room. He was a handsome, tall, blond, athletic man of thirty-five, who had grown up in a lower-middle-class household in Patchogue, Long Island, the second of three children, and had always had about him a kind of preternatural equipoise, an atmosphere of being at home in the world.

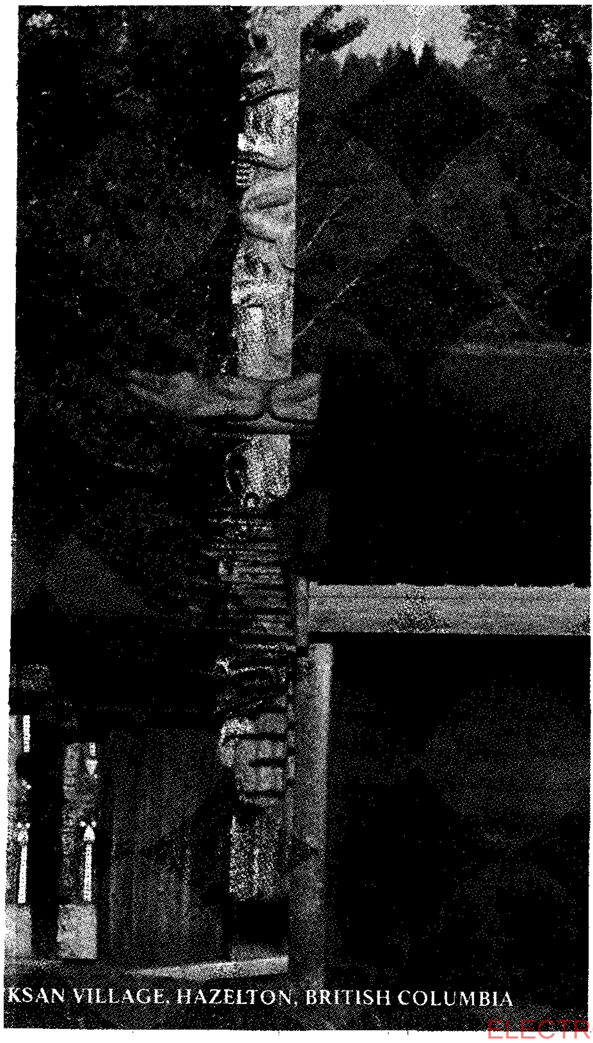
MacDonald went to Princeton on a scholarship in 1961 (he was apparently the first student from Patchogue High School to go to an Ivy League college), then to Northwestern University Medical School, and then to Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, in New York, for his interneship. In the summer following his sophomore year at Princeton and her sophomore year at Skidmore, MacDonald's girlfriend Colette Stevenson became pregnant. The couple decided against abortion and were married in the fall of 1963. Colette left Skidmore, and Kimberly was born in Princeton; Kristen was born in Illinois. Photographs show Colette to have been a pretty, blond girl with a soft, rounded face; all accounts of her stress her reserve, her quietness, her kindliness, and her conventional femininity. At the time of her death, she was taking an evening course in psychology at the North Carolina State University extension at Fort Bragg.

A few days before the fund-raising dinner dance, McGinniss went to see MacDonald at his apartment and interviewed him for his column. Near the end of the interview, MacDonald asked McGinniss if he would like to attend the murder trial—in Raleigh, North Carolina—and write a book about the case from the perspective of the defense team, with whom he would live, and to all of whose plans, strategies, and deliberations he would be privy. This proposal had a special appeal for McGinniss. The situation that MacDonald outlined resembled McGinniss's situation with the Nixon advertising people, which had had such a successful result. Although none of us ever completely outgrows the voyeurism of childhood, in some of us it lives on more strongly than in others—thus the avid interest of some of us in being "insiders" or in getting the "inside" view of things. In my talk with McGinniss in Williamstown, he used an arresting image: "MacDonald was clearly trying to manipulate me, and I was aware of it from the beginning. But did I have an obligation to say, 'Wait a minute. I think you are manipulating me, and I have to call your attention to the fact that I'm aware of this, just so you'll understand you are not succeeding'? Do little bells have to go off at a certain point? This has never been the case before. This could inhibit any but the most superficial reporting. We could all be reduced to standing in the street interviewing the survivors of fires."

McGinniss, of course, wanted to be in the burning house itself, and when MacDonald presented his proposition the allure of the flames was strong enough to cause him to accept a condition that another writer might have

found unacceptable—namely, that he give MacDonald a share of the book's proceeds. McGinniss was not the first writer MacDonald had approached. For many years, at the prodding of his lawyer, Bernard Segal (who had defended him before the Army tribunal, and who remained his lawyer until 1982), MacDonald had been offering himself as a subject to writers. It had been Segal's idea—fantasy, as it proved—that a book would bring in a sizable portion of the money needed to pay for MacDonald's defense. "We were running into the red substantially," Segal testified at the McGinniss trial. "People were working without salaries . . . and I thought a book with an advance that was substantial and fair would help out." Two writers who had nibbled at the bait but had not been netted were Edward Keyes and Joseph Wambaugh; Keyes couldn't get the necessary advance, and Wambaugh couldn't come to the trial, because he was making a film. The hope of finding a writer had been pretty much abandoned, and when McGinniss turned up on the eve of the trial he was like the answer to a prayer one had no longer thought worth uttering. The dovetailing of desires was remarkable: McGinniss would get his insider's spot ("I wouldn't have wanted to just go to the trial and sit out there with the other reporters," he told me. "I wanted to do it from the inside looking out, and I wanted total access to MacDonald and his lawyers"), and MacDonald would get his money. In the deal that was presently struck—presided over by Segal and Sterling Lord, McGinniss's agent, who had got McGinniss a contract with the Dell/Delacorte publishing company and his three-hundred-thousand-dollar advance—McGinniss would receive not only total access but also a written promise of exclusivity and a release from all legal liability: MacDonald would lend himself to no other writer and would not sue McGinniss for libel if he didn't like what was written. For his part, MacDonald would receive twenty-six and a half per cent of the advance and thirty-three per cent of the royalties. The arrangement was a kind of reification of the hopes and good intentions that writers and subjects normally exchange at the beginning of their enterprise. The money that MacDonald was to get was simply a more tangible manifestation of the reward that every subject expects to receive at the end of the project—why else would he lend himself to it? And, similarly, the written assurances that McGinniss received from MacDonald were no different from the tacit ones that writers normally receive from subjects: It is *understood* that the subject will not sue, and that he will not faithlessly go to another writer.

It is understood—and yet it is also known that subjects do sometimes sue writers, and that they do sometimes leave one writer for another, or abruptly break off the interviews. It is the latter eventuality, with its immediate disastrous effect on his project, that causes the writer the greatest anxiety (a lawsuit can occur only after the project is completed, in some hazy distant future) and impels him toward the devices and disingenuousnesses that came under unprecedentedly close scrutiny in the MacDonald-McGinniss lawsuit. But the writer isn't alone in his anxiety. Even as he is worriedly striving to keep the subject talking, the subject is worriedly striving to keep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The World Next Door

the writer *listening*. The subject is Scheherazade. He lives in fear of being found uninteresting, and many of the strange things that subjects say to writers—things of almost suicidal rashness—they say out of their desperate need to keep the writer's attention riveted. In the MacDonald-McGinniss encounter—the encounter of a man accused of a terrible crime with a journalist whom he tries to keep listening to his tale of innocence—we have a grotesquely magnified version of the normal journalistic encounter. Even though the crimes to which the normal subject pleads innocent—vanity, hypocrisy, pomposity, inanity, mediocrity—are less serious than those of which MacDonald stood accused, the outcome tends to be the same: as MacDonald's tale ultimately failed to hold McGinniss—whose attention soon shifted to the rhetorically superior story of the prosecution—so do the majority of stories told to journalists fail of their object. The writer ultimately tires of the subject's self-serving story, and substitutes a story of his own. The story of subject and writer is the Scheherazade story with a bad ending: in almost no case does the subject manage to, as it were, save himself.

AS if sensing the deeper structures of the Devil's pact he was brokering between MacDonald and McGinniss, Segal, when called upon to approve a release from McGinniss's publisher, scribbled in a proviso whose language, on first reading, seems oddly ambiguous for a lawyer to use. The release was dated August 3, 1979, and was written in the form of a letter from MacDonald to McGinniss which began, "I understand you are writing a book about my life centering on my current trial for murder." The letter's third paragraph, where Segal's emendation took place, originally read:

> I realize, of course, that you do not propose to libel me. Nevertheless, in order that you may feel free to write the book in any manner that you may deem best, I agree that I will not make or assert against you, the publisher, or its licensees or anyone else involved in the production or distribution of the book, any claim or demand whatsoever based on the ground that anything contained in the book defames me.

Segal felt constrained to change the final period to a comma and to add these words: "provided that the essential integrity of my life story is maintained." Eight years later, in the MacDonald-McGinniss suit, it became MacDonald's contention that the "essential integrity" of his life story had not been maintained in McGinniss's book, and that McGinniss was guilty of a kind of soul murder, for which it was necessary that he be brought to account. The federal judge assigned to the case, William Rea, also seemed to hear the Commendatore's music wafting out of the complaint and, in his denial of McGinniss's motion for summary judgment, to concur with the plaintiff's moralistic view of the case.

But all this was many years into the future. In the summer of 1979, MacDonald and McGinniss were Damon and Pythias. In common with many other subjects and writers, they clothed their complicated business together in the mantle of friendship—in this case, friendship of a particularly American cast, whose emblems of intimacy are watching sports on television, drinking beer, running, and classifying women according to looks. A few weeks after writing about MacDonald for the *Herald Examiner*, McGinniss gave up his guest column and flew to Raleigh to take up his insider's post with the MacDonald defense; he moved into the Kappa Alpha fraternity house on the North Carolina State University campus, which Segal had rented for the summer, and there joined MacDonald, his mother, Segal, and the various lawyers, paralegals, law students, and volunteers of the defense group. One member of this group was Michael Malley, a lawyer, who had been MacDonald's roommate at Princeton and had taken part in MacDonald's defense at the Army hearing that dismissed the charges against him in 1970. Now, on leave from his law firm in Phoenix, Malley had once again put himself at the service of his friend, and, alone of the group, was not happy about the insertion of McGinniss into its midst. As Malley was to testify later, he had nothing against McGinniss personally—indeed, he liked him, the way everyone else did—but he felt there was something fundamentally risky about letting a writer into the inner councils of the defense. "I felt that if Joe was there all the time, we had a real problem about the attorney-client privilege," Malley said, adding, by way of explanation, "The privilege is that anything you say to your attorney isn't going to go beyond the attorney unless

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DAYS

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|---|---|---|---|---|
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| 16 | 14 | 11 | f | Amsterdam, Holland |
| 17 | 15 | 12 | s | sail |
| 19 | 17 | 14 | m | Flaam, Aurlandsfjord<br>Gudvangen, Naeroyfjord |
| 20 | 18 | 15 | t | Kristiansund, Norway<br>Cruise Inside Passage |
| 21 | 19 | 16 | w | Cross Arctic Circle<br>Afternoon cruise of Holandsfjord with Svartisen Glacier<br>Evening cruise the Raftsund |
| 22 | 20 | 17 | th | Gravdal, Norway |
| 24 | 22 | 19 | s | Hellesylt, Geirangerfjord<br>Geiranger |
| 25 | 23 | 20 | su | Bergen, Norway |
| 27 | 25 | 22 | t | Oslo, Norway |
| 28 | 26 | 23 | w | sail |
| 29 | 27 | 24 | th | Copenhagen, Denmark |

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DAYS

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|---|---|---|---|
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| JULY | | | |
| 1 | 29 | s | Helsinki, Finland |
| 2 | 30 | su | Leningrad, USSR |
| | AUG | | |
| 4 | 1 | t | sail |
| 5 | 2 | w | Stockholm, Sweden |
| 7 | 4 | f | sail |
| 8 | 5 | s | Visby, Sweden |
| 9 | 6 | su | Ystad, Sweden |
| 10 | 7 | m | Cruise Kiel Canal<br>Hamburg, Germany |
| 11 | 8 | t | sail |
| 13 | 10 | th | London, England |

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15
DAYS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| AUG | 24 | th | Copenhagen, Denmark |
| AUG | 25 | f | Kiel Canal transit |
| AUG | 27 | su | Jersey Island, United Kingdom |
| AUG | 28 | m | Bordeaux, France |
| AUG | 30 | w | sail |
| SEP | 1 | f | Lisbon, Portugal |
| SEP | 2 | s | sail |
| SEP | 3 | su | Malaga, Spain<br>Motril, Spain |
| SEP | 4 | m | Ibiza, Spain |
| SEP | 5 | t | sail |
| SEP | 6 | w | Sète, France |
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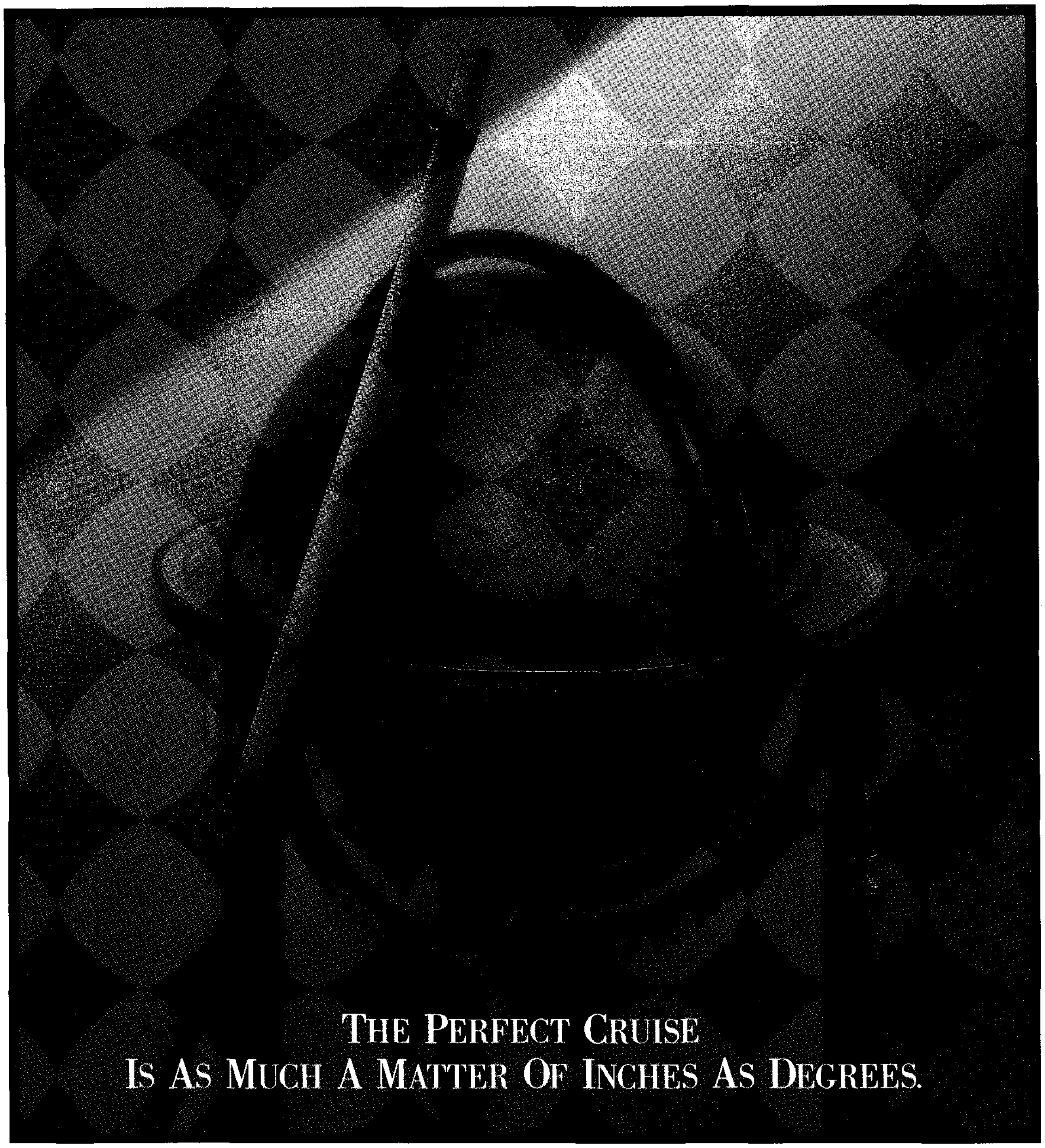

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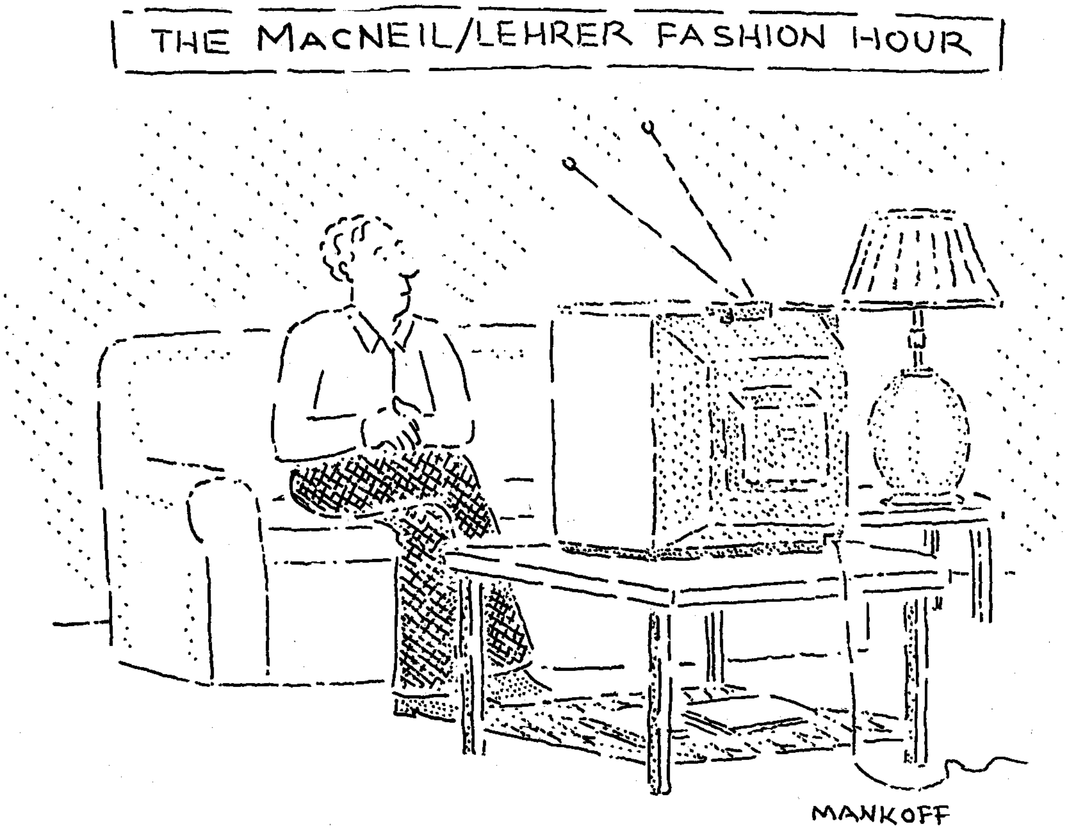

*"So, to summarize your position, Professor, you think softly draped trousers and a discreet use of glitter is very important in a geostrategic context."*

• •

the client agrees to it. But if there is an outsider present, somebody who doesn't belong to the defense team, the privilege is waived. And Joe, to me, clearly seemed to be an outsider, and I simply didn't like it." Malley told Segal of his concern about McGinniss, and Segal came up with a solution to the problem of the attorney-client privilege which Malley reluctantly accepted: McGinniss would be made an official member of the defense team—he would sign an employment agreement with Segal—and would thus be protected against, for example, any attempt by the prosecution to get at the defense's secrets by subpoenaing his notes.

The criminal trial in Raleigh lasted seven weeks and ended, on August 29th, with MacDonald's conviction—to the shock and horror of the defense. McGinniss, on hearing the verdict, cried, as did everyone else in the defense group. MacDonald was put in handcuffs and taken to a federal prison in Butner, North Carolina. The next day, he wrote a letter to McGinniss—the first letter in a correspondence that was to last almost four years. "I've got to write to you so I won't go crazy," he began. His letter ended with this emotional paragraph:

> I want to see Bernie [Segal], because I love him & he is probably hurting beyond belief & wants to know he is not to blame. I want to see my Mom, because no matter how I look, by seeing me she will be better (and I probably will be, too). I would also love to see my best friends—including (I hope) you. But in all honesty, I'm crying too much today, and do cry whenever I think of my close friends. I feel dirty & soiled by the decision & can't tell you why, and am ashamed. I somehow don't feel that way with Bernie & Mom but think today it would be difficult to look at you or shake your hand—I know I'll cry and want to hug you—and yet the verdict stands there, screaming, "You are guilty of the murder of your family!!" And I don't know what to say to you except it is not true, and I hope you know that and feel it and that you are my friend.

McGinniss did not "know that." In the course of the trial, he had become persuaded of MacDonald's guilt and had found himself once again in the position—the one he had held with the Nixon advertising group—of enemy infiltrator. In July, 1983, two months before the publication of "Fatal Vision," Bob Keeler, a reporter from *Newsday*, who had also attended the criminal trial, interviewed McGinniss for an article he was writing for *The Newsday Magazine* and questioned him closely about the uncomfortableness of his situation in Raleigh. "There was nobody to talk to," McGinniss told Keeler. "I couldn't react. I couldn't say to someone sitting next to me in the courtroom, 'Hey, this doesn't sound good.' "

"What was your anticipation of the result when the jury went out to deliberate?" Keeler asked.

"I was not convinced they were going to convict him. At the same time, I said to myself, 'If I were a juror I would vote to convict.' But I didn't think that those twelve people were all going to come to the same conclusion I had come to. I didn't know if it was going to be a hung jury or an acquittal. But I think I would have predicted either of those two results ahead of the conviction."

"O.K. So the day after the conviction you went down to Butner, and Jeff hugs you and says he hopes you're going to be his friend forever. What were your feelings at the moment? Obviously, by that time you must have known the book was going to come out showing him to be a guilty guy. How did you feel at that moment?"

"I felt terribly conflicted. I knew he had done it—no question—but I had just spent the summer with the guy, who on one level is a terribly easy person to like. But how can you like a guy who has killed his wife and kids? It was a very complex set of emotions I felt, and I was very happy to leave him behind in prison."

Later in the interview, Keeler asked McGinniss this blunt question: "One of the theories among the reporters at the trial was that you were going to write this Jeffrey MacDonald-the-tortured-innocent book. Another theory was that you were going to do to Jeffrey MacDonald what you'd done to Richard M. Nixon—that is to say, to be in his presence and in his confidence for a number of months and then run it up his butt sideways. And I'm wondering, since the latter has turned out to be

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the case, whether that's going to provide a problem for you in the future. That is to say, is anybody ever going to trust you again?"

"Well, they can trust me if they're innocent," McGinniss retorted.

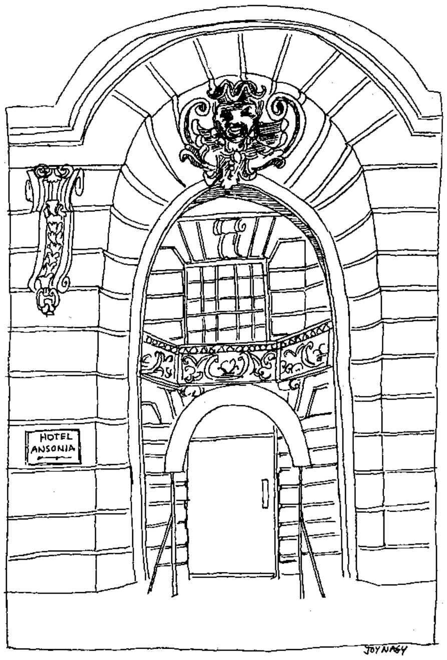
"You don't feel that you in any sense betrayed Jeffrey or did him dirt or anything?"

"My only obligation from the beginning was to the truth."

"How would you describe your feelings about Jeffrey MacDonald now? This is a complex question, obviously, but obviously you're going to be asked this on talk shows, and you're going to have thirty seconds or ten seconds to think about it. How would you describe it?"

"Right now, I have a strange absence of feeling toward him. He has occupied so much of my consciousness and subconscious for so long that, with the book finally done, I find myself kind of numb in regard to him. I don't have a feeling except the feeling that has been with me, which isn't focussed so specifically on him but on the whole thing—a sadness that just doesn't go away. It's just sadness, sadness, sadness. Such a tragic, terrible waste, and such a dark and internally persecuted human being he is. He is so different from what he appears to be. I feel very sad that he didn't turn out to be who he wanted me to think he was. Because that would have been a lot easier to handle."

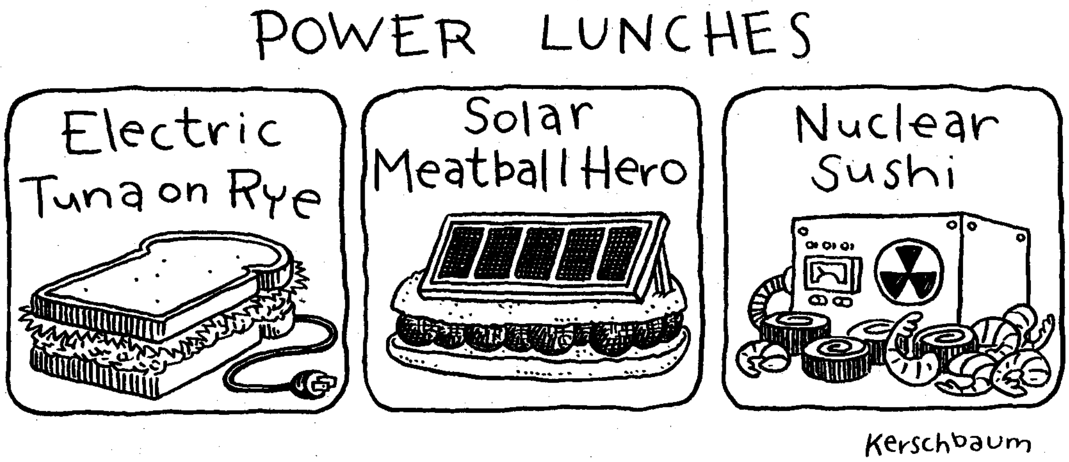
MacDonald was transferred from the Butner prison to the Terminal Island Federal Correctional Institution, near Long Beach, California—after a bus trip that spread over several weeks, during which he was kept in shackles—and in November McGinniss flew out to see him there and to continue his research for the book. Although he had glued himself to MacDonald in North Carolina, McGinniss had put off interviewing him about his life before the murders until the trial was over; now he would do this work. But at the prison McGinniss was prevented from bringing a tape recorder, or even a notebook and pencil, into the visiting room. So the men devised a scheme that would take the place of interviews: MacDonald would recollect his past into a tape recorder and mail the tapes (via his mother) to McGinniss. Over the next two years, MacDonald sent McGinniss a total of thirty tapes, which he made under somewhat mysterious circumstances (How did he get a tape recorder into his cell? Why was he never caught recording? Why was the tape recorder never found by guards? Why was his mother never caught smuggling the tapes out?), and from which McGinniss quoted excerpts in his book in chapters entitled "The Voice of Jeffrey MacDonald," alternating with the narrative proper. McGinniss stayed in California a week, and during his stay MacDonald put his empty condominium—a half hour's drive from the prison—at McGinniss's disposal. McGinniss slept in a guest room–office, and during the day (he visited MacDonald in the late afternoon) he would read in the massive files on the case that MacDonald kept there and had given him carte blanche to rifle. McGinniss found so much of interest in the files that he asked MacDonald if he might take some of the material back home with him; the ever-obliging MacDonald agreed, and even lent him a suitcase in which to cart the stuff. Among the documents McGinniss found in the apartment, the most exciting to him was an account MacDonald had handwritten for his attorneys at the Army hearing in 1970. In it (the document was later made public), he listed all his activities on the evening of the murders and mentioned a diet pill, Eskatrol—an amphetamine combined with a sedative—that he had been taking. McGinniss, baffled, like everyone else, as to what could have prompted MacDonald to kill his family, and in such a savage way, consulted various pharmaceutical texts and found that Eskatrol could induce psychosis when taken in high enough doses. (It was removed from the market in 1980.) MacDonald had written:



> We ate dinner together at 5:45 p.m. (all four). It is possible I had one diet pill at this time. I do not remember, and do not think I had one, but it is possible. I had been running a weight-control program for my unit, and I put my name at the top of the program to encourage participation. I had lost 12-15 lbs. in the prior 3-4 weeks, in the process using 3-5 capsules of Eskatrol Spansule. [In "Fatal Vision," McGinniss dropped the clause "and do not think I had one."]

Not implausibly, McGinniss interpreted "3-5 capsules" to mean three to five capsules a *day*, which is an overdose, and he went on to propose in "Fatal Vision" that MacDonald killed his wife and daughters in a fit of rage toward the female sex—a rage that he had been repressing since early childhood and that the drug (in combination with stress, fatigue, and Colette MacDonald's threatening "new insights into personality structure and behavioral patterns," picked up at the psychology course she was taking and had just come home from) finally permitted him to vent. McGinniss based his theory of the crime on an unironic reading of three moral tracts—Otto Kernberg's "Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism," Christopher Lasch's "The Culture of Narcissism," and Hervey Cleckley's "The Mask of Sanity"—in which the terms "psychopath" and "pathological narcissist" are confidently offered as the answer to the problem of evil (as if labelling were ever anything more than the restatement of a problem). In the MacDonald-McGinniss trial, to lend credence to McGinniss's labelling of MacDonald as a pathological narcissist, Kornstein invited Kernberg himself to appear as an expert witness and apply to MacDonald the adjectives he applies to the patients in his book—"grandiose," "cold," "shallow," "ruthless," "exploitative," "parasitic," "haughty," "envious," "self-centered," "lacking in emotional depth," "deficient in genuine feelings of sadness"—who suffer from the malady he has invented. Kernberg prudently declined, and suggested a colleague of his, Michael Stone, for the role, which Stone accepted and played to the hilt.

Another arresting find of McGinniss's at the MacDonald apartment



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was a letter from Joseph Wambaugh, dated March 28, 1975, spelling out the conditions under which he would consider writing a book about MacDonald. The letter's tone is more like that of the charmless writing in small print on a baggage-claim check than like the communication of an author to a prospective subject. As he read, McGinniss must have marvelled at, and possibly envied, Wambaugh's *je m'en foutisme.* But then Wambaugh was an ex-cop (he was once a detective on the Los Angeles police force), and, maybe even more to the point, he was one of America's most successful popular writers, who apparently could afford to be blunt (as McGinniss, strapped for cash, apparently could not). "You should understand that I would not think of writing *your* story," Wambaugh wrote, and he went on:

> It would be *my* story. Just as "The Onion Field" was *my* story and "In Cold Blood" was Capote's story. We both had the living persons sign legal releases which authorized us to interpret, portray, and characterize them as we saw fit, trusting us implicitly to be honest and faithful to the truth as *we* saw it, not as *they* saw it.
>
> With this release you can readily see that you would have no recourse at law if you didn't like my portrayal of you. Let's face another ugly possibility: what if I, after spending months of research and interviewing dozens of people and listening to hours of court trials, did not believe you innocent?
>
> I suspect that you may want a writer who would tell *your* story, and indeed your version may very well be the truth as I would see it. But you'd have *no* guarantee, not with me. You'd have absolutely *no* editorial prerogative. You would not even see the book until publication.

McGinniss quotes this letter in "Fatal Vision," and also quotes from a note that MacDonald sent to Segal about the letter: "What do you think? He sounds awfully arrogant to me, but it will be an obvious best-seller if he writes the book." McGinniss goes on, "Wambaugh, of course, had not written the book. . . . Now I was writing it." He adds, assuming some of Wambaugh's toughness, "As would have been the case with Wambaugh, MacDonald had absolutely no editorial prerogative. And the 'ugly possibility' to which Wambaugh referred had now become a reality."

But toward MacDonald himself McGinniss continued to behave with his customary ingratiation. For almost four years—during which he corresponded with MacDonald, spoke with him on the telephone, received his tapes, and, on two occasions, visited him—he successfully hid the fact that in the book under preparation he was portraying MacDonald as a psychopathic killer. In 1981, in a letter to his editor at Dell, McGinniss wrote nervously, "The ice is getting thinner, and I'm still a long way from shore." But he need not have worried; MacDonald never twigged to the ruse. Like the dupe in the Milgram deception, the naïve subject of a book becomes so caught up in the enterprise and so emotionally invested in it that he simply cannot conceive of it in any terms other than those the writer has set for it. As the Milgram subject imagined he was "helping" someone to learn, so MacDonald imagined he was "helping" McGinniss write a book exonerating him of the crime, and presenting him as a kind of kitsch hero ("loving father and husband," "dedicated physician," "overachiever"). When, instead, McGinniss wrote a book charging him with the crime, and presenting him as a kitsch villain ("publicity-seeker," "womanizer," "latent homosexual"), MacDonald was stunned. His dehoaxing took place in a particularly dramatic and cruel manner. McGinniss had steadfastly refused to let him see galleys or an advance copy of the book. In a letter of February 16, 1983, he had written sternly, "I understand your impatience, and it is to that that I will attribute the unpleasantness of your tone. . . . At no time was there ever any understanding that you would be given an advance look at the book six months prior to publication. As Joe Wambaugh told you in 1975, with him you would not even see a copy before it was published. Same with me. Same with any principled and responsible author." MacDonald had accepted the rebuke, and had enthusiastically lent himself to the pre-publication publicity campaign for the book. His assignment was an appearance on the television show "60 Minutes," and it was during the taping of the show in prison that the fact of McGinniss's duplicity was brought home to him. As Mike Wallace—who had received an advance copy of "Fatal Vision" without difficulty or a lecture—read out loud to MacDonald passages in which he was portrayed as a psychopathic killer, the camera recorded his look of shock and utter discomposure.

Milgram, in the chapter on methodology in "Obedience to Authority," explains that he did not use Yale undergraduates as subjects because of the risk that word of the experiment might get out among the student population. But there is reason to think—extrapolating from the writer-subject experiment—that even subjects who had heard of the Milgram experiment would have fallen into its trap after only a slight alteration of its character. MacDonald, after all, had heard of people who were displeased with what was written about them (sometimes to the point of suing the writer), and still he behaved as if there were no possibility that his "own" book could be anything but flattering and gratifying. Perhaps even more striking is MacDonald's continuing and, under the

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circumstances, crazy trust in the good intentions of journalists. To this day, after all that has happened to him, he continues to give interviews to journalists, continues to correspond with them, continues to send them material (through an out-of-prison information office run by a woman named Gail Boyce), and does everything he can to be helpful to them, just as he did with McGinniss. Something seems to happen to people when they meet a journalist, and what happens is exactly the opposite of what one would expect. One would think that extreme wariness and caution would be the order of the day, but in fact childish trust and impetuosity are far more common. The journalistic encounter seems to have the same regressive effect on a subject as the psychoanalytic encounter. The subject becomes a kind of child of the writer, regarding him as a permissive, all-accepting, all-forgiving mother, and expecting that the book will be written by her. Of course, the book is written by the strict, all-noticing, unforgiving father. During our conversation in Williamstown, McGinniss quoted the following passage from an essay by Thomas Mann, which he had come upon in a book by another of his literary heroes, Joseph Campbell:

> The look that one directs at things, both outward and inward, as an artist, is not the same as that with which one would regard the same as a man, but at once colder and more passionate. As a man, you might be well-disposed, patient, loving, positive, and have a wholly uncritical inclination to look upon everything as all right, but as artist your daemon constrains you to "observe," to take note, lightning fast and with hurtful malice, of every detail that in the literary sense would be *characteristic, distinctive, significant,* opening insights, typifying the race, the social or the psychological mode, recording all as mercilessly as though you had no human relationship to the observed object whatever.

"This isn't something that you can argue before a jury of people who don't read books," McGinniss said to me, "but it seems to me to get right to the heart of it." He told me that he had "compartmentalized" his conflicting attitudes toward MacDonald. "The first letter I got from the guy, written eighteen hours after his conviction, brought tears to my eyes. I felt genuine sorrow. He wrote, 'All I want to know is that you're still my friend and you believe in me.' So what's the appropriate response? To send back a paragraph that says, 'I reserve the right to my own opinions, and I remind you that I'm the author and you are the subject, and we have to keep things on that level'? Or do I write back and say, 'You sound terrible, prison must be awful, I really feel bad for you'? All of which was an expression of genuine feeling at that time on my part. Not a lie. But I was compartmentalizing. I was suspending my critical faculty long enough to allow me to write that letter."

The letter in question was written on September 11, 1979, twelve days after MacDonald's first letter to McGinniss. It read, in part:

> DEAR JEFF,
>
> Every morning for a week now, I've been waking up wondering where you are. A bus! Christ! It seems that the only function a ride across country in a prison bus might serve is to make your destination seem not quite as awful as it otherwise would have. On the other hand, I'm sure your destination seems awful. Is awful. Terminal Island. Pretty terrible name, on top of everything else. . . .
>
> I am glad to see that you are able to write—to describe and analyze both what happened to you and your own feelings about it. I have plenty of my own thoughts, which I'll be getting to sooner or later, but mostly I am relieved to see that you are apparently able to function constructively despite the extreme limitations. Also, I'm glad you didn't kill yourself, because that sure would have been a bummer for the book. . . .
>
> There could not be a worse nightmare than the one you are living through now—but it is only a phase. Total strangers can recognize within five minutes that you did not receive a fair trial. . . .
>
> Well, I'm sure when I see you we will have plenty of chance to talk about that as well as many other things. Bob Keeler, incidentally, told me he planned to spend quite a bit of time interviewing you at Terminal Island. Told me also he wants to write a book on the case & is talking to Doubleday about it. I would just as soon he did not write a book; & Delacorte will be announcing my book—and the full and exclusive access aspect of our relationship—this week to try and keep the field reasonably clear. Frankly, I am not sure what Keeler's attitude toward you is. I'm not implying that he believes you are guilty—I just don't know, but I think it would be better on many counts if you did nothing to encourage or to assist anyone else who might be planning to write about this. . . .
>
> You must fear—on top of everything else—that you will somehow become a non-person. Just—poof—there is no more Jeff. There is just this big empty space where he was. Well, that's not going to happen, because there are too many people who care too much about you, and please try to remember that during those hours and days when you feel at your worst. . . . I will be back home by Sept. 25—into N.Y. on Sept. 26 for meetings about this book

> with Delacorte—it's a dinner, actually, where the president of the company & Sterling [Lord] & I will try to block out a reasonable timetable & where I explain to them how things managed to take this drastic & unexpected turn for the shitty. . . . I have much, much more to say, but I do want you to receive at least this much from me by the time you reach Cal. . . . I'll write again in a couple of days. Jeff, it's all so fucking awful I can't believe it yet—the sight of the jury coming in—of the jury polling—of you standing—saying those few words—being led out—and then seeing you in a fucking prison. It's a hell of a thing—spend the summer making a new friend and then the bastards come along and lock him up. But not for long, Jeffrey—not for long.
>
> More soon—
>
> JOE

This letter, like the overture to an opera, announces all the themes of the coming correspondence. Until close to the publication of "Fatal Vision," when McGinniss apparently felt he could afford to be a bit cold and careless with MacDonald, he wrote letters assuring MacDonald of his friendship, commiserating with him about his situation, offering him advice about his appeal, requesting information for the book, and fretting about competing writers. The passages dealing with this last concern—a very common one among writers (every writer thinks someone else is working on his subject; it is part of the paranoid state of mind necessary for the completion of the infinitely postponable task of writing)—make especially painful reading, in a correspondence full of painful moments. McGinniss had a real cause for worry: two people were actually planning to write books about the MacDonald case. One was Bob Keeler, who had been covering the case for *Newsday* since the early seventies; the other was Freddy Kassab, the stepfather of the murdered woman, who was looking for an as-told-to writer to set forth his version. But the measures that McGinniss, his agent, and his publisher took to insure that no one but McGinniss would come out with a book about MacDonald were extraordinarily active.

McGinniss to MacDonald, September 28, 1979:

> I mentioned to your Mom last night that I felt strongly you should not start doing a *bunch of interviews while in prison.* There's no way that kind of thing can do you any good right now; I am thinking of Keeler in particular. Whether or not he is going ahead with his book I do not know, but, frankly, the one and only one in which you have any interest is the one to which I

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will be devoting the next two years of my life. . . . Sterling and Ross Claiborne [vice-president of Dell], incidentally, both felt very strongly that any major stories, interviews, etc. done with you at this time would undermine my position to some extent.

McGinniss to MacDonald, November 19, 1979:

Keeler seems awfully well plugged in, & your Mom says he's been nosing around Schenectady & vicinity trying to get old acquaintances of your sister's to talk. Sounds to me like he is definitely doing a book, and with Freddy still trying to do his own, you & I had better get asses in gear.

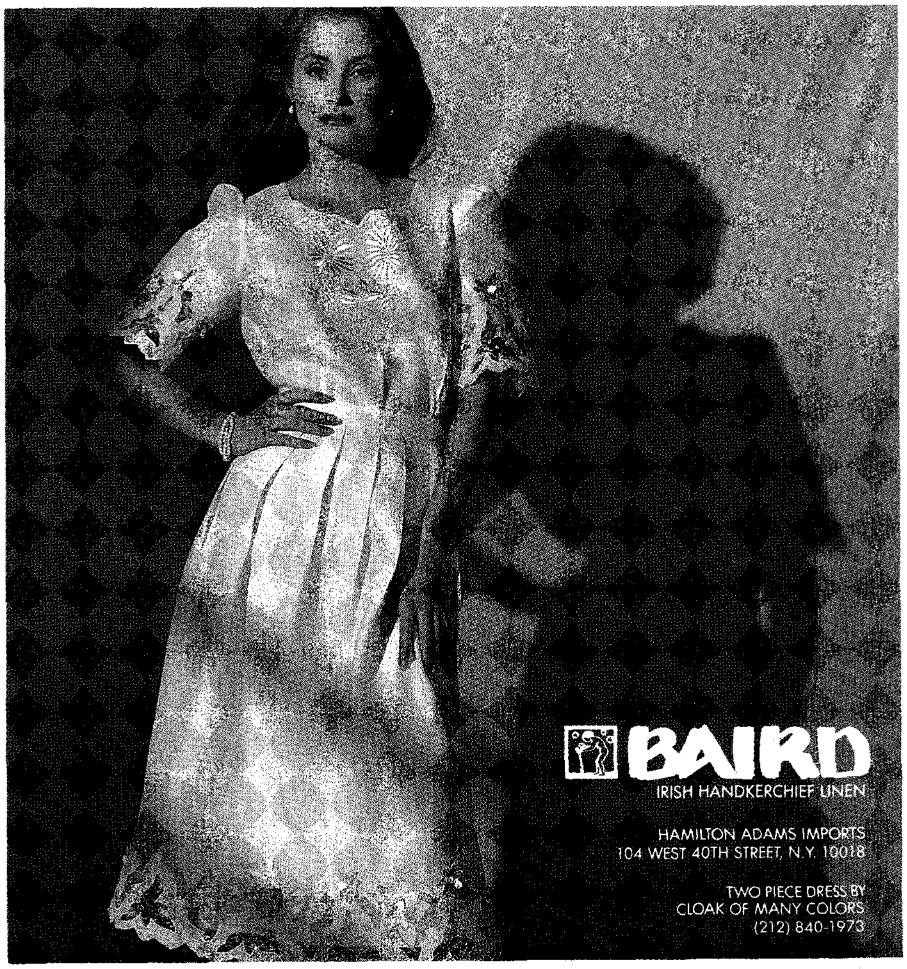
McGinniss to MacDonald, December 18, 1979:

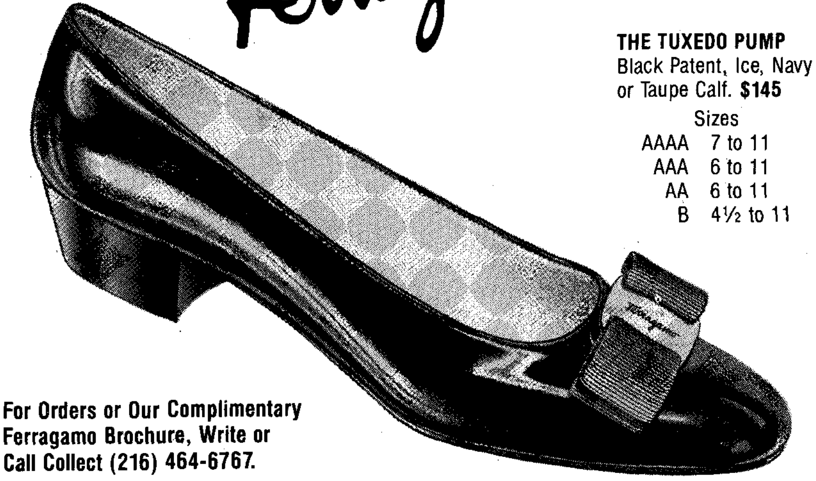
Freddy Kassab has made it official. The New York Times book division . . . has given him a contract for a book about you and the murders and how he eventually brought you to trial. . . . The first thing this means is that now Freddy will never talk to me about anything, which will make certain aspects of my book a little more complicated, and the second thing is I want to be sure that the two books are not published at the same time, or even in the same season. I really don't care which comes first: I just don't want them coming out together. Can you imagine me going around the country on talk shows with that guy?

I wonder whether from your end, it might not be a good idea to have Bernie [Segal] send some sort of letter to New York Times Books and/or to the writer, reminding them of the extent to which libel and invasion of privacy laws might apply in this situation. . . .

Anyway, New York Times Books is not, despite the impressiveness of anything with NY Times in the title, a particularly attractive place to wind up. It is most certainly not in the first, or even second echelon of publishers, but even so, your personal life and my professional life would both be a bit simpler if Freddy Kassab were not writing his own book. If a timely reminder of legal implications might still be able to forestall this, I would think it worth a try. . . .

Just as I wrote that, I decided to call Ross Claiborne back and see what he thought of all this. First, he tells me he has just received another call, this time from an editor at Time-Life books, saying they were "considering" a proposal for "a book" about MacDonald, etc. This editor wanted to know the status of mine, and Ross C. said, oh, it's very far along; research completed; writing is coming very well; he's well into it. This is known in the trade as heading off at the pass. The Time-Life editor did not say whose proposal they were considering, and now the situation is extremely confused. Is this a third book in the offing (possibly by Keeler?). Or, is *this* the Freddy proposal, still not accepted, but only being considered by Time-Life, and not the NY Times? . . . It may be tomorrow, actually, before I hear back on any of this, but, at any rate, you're getting a rare inside glimpse into the wonderful world of pub-





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lishing and how sometimes gamesmanship can be almost as much of a factor as literary merit.

McGinniss to MacDonald, December 20, 1979:

Update from the ever-changing publishing world: the New York Times Books is not, repeat not, doing a Freddy Kassab book. Ross Claiborne's original info was wrong. . . . In early January Delacorte/Dell will issue a release to *Publishers Weekly*, *Variety*, and other interested outlets that they have *this* book in the works, and it's a big deal, and etc. etc. to try to drive away any other interested bystanders. That sort of thing also generates some movie interest as well.

McGinniss to MacDonald, January 10, 1980:

Keeler's opus will run in *Newsday* sometime soon, and he probably plans to use that as his book proposal—showing how much work he's already done, etc. . . . I am uncomfortable thinking that someone else already knows more about any aspect of this than I do, but Keeler obviously is way ahead of me in Patchogue. I trust we'll be able to catch up. You can see, though, the wisdom in not cooperating with him.

McGinniss to MacDonald, February 26, 1980:

Keeler's thing came out last weekend, and it sure was a piece of crap. Whew! Real cheap soap-opera shit. Not overtly hostile to you—particularly considering his personal feelings—but just such a shitty piece of work. Badly written—atrociously written, in fact, which surprised me, because his basic trial coverage was well done—sloppily organized, and just, in the end, pointless. . . . Makes me wonder what the value would be of all Keeler's six years of research stuff from Long Island.

McGinniss to MacDonald, March 18, 1980:

I get back here to discover, through a somewhat frantic phone call from Ross Claiborne, that Freddy has apparently succeeded in getting a publisher for his book, and, what is more troubling, has obtained the services of a first-rate writer to do the book. The writer's name is J. D. Reed, and he is on the staff of *Sports Illustrated* but also the author of "Free Fall," a novel about the D. B. Cooper caper, which is selling very well and has just been bought for a movie, giving Reed a temporarily hot hand, and apparently causing great Hollywood interest in the Freddy story as a movie.

McGinniss to MacDonald, March 28, 1980:

Update from the land of eastern standard time, big-time publishing, and gray, post-winter days that don't know when to quit. . . .

I talked to Bernie last weekend and he said he would send letters both to the president of Doubleday and to Reed. . . . Reed has already told Ross Claiborne he is "not committed" to this project

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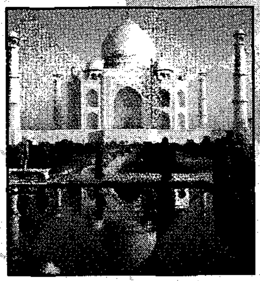

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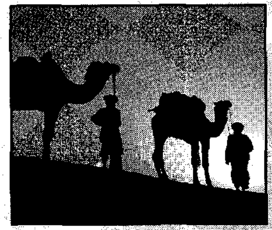

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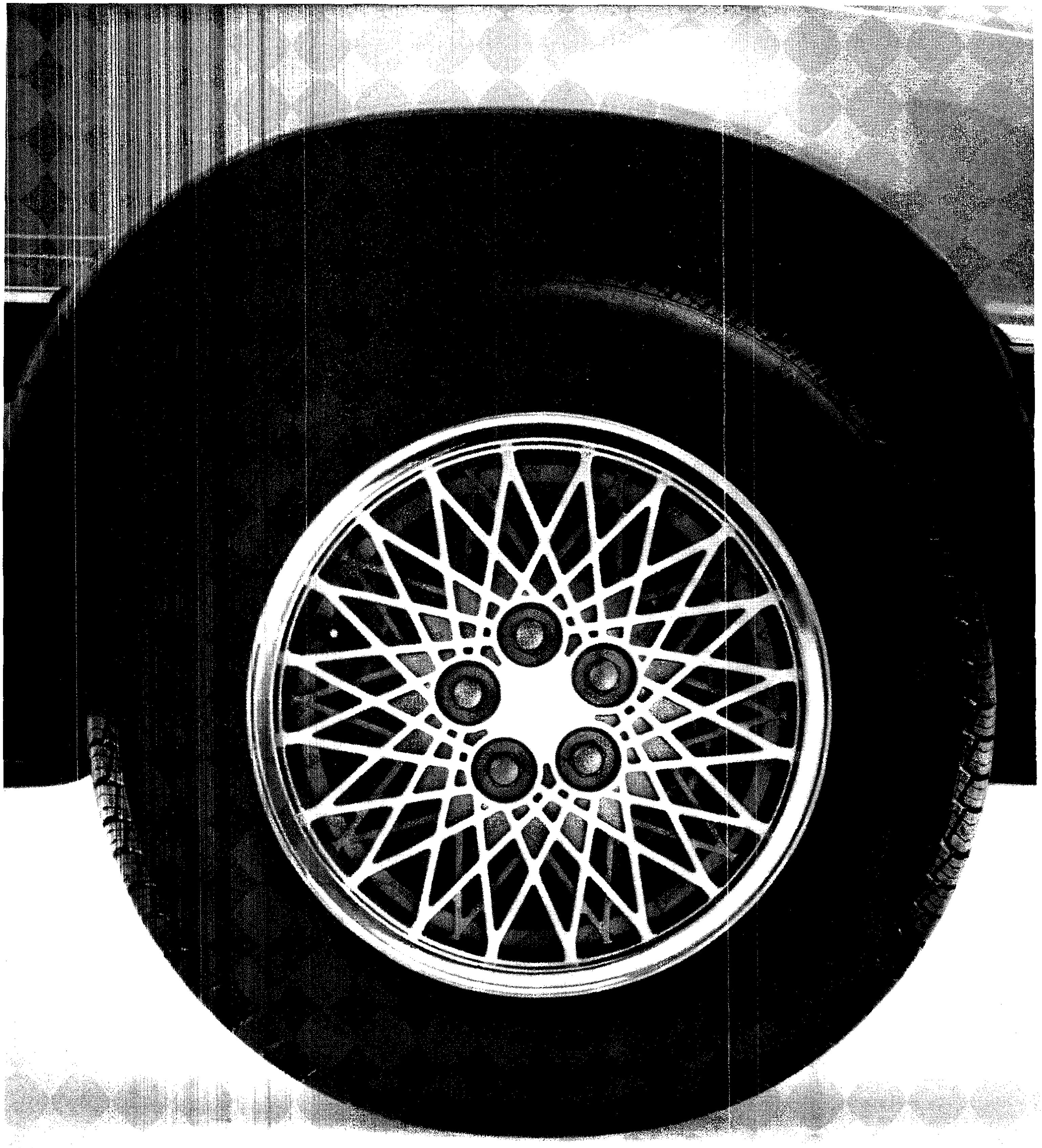

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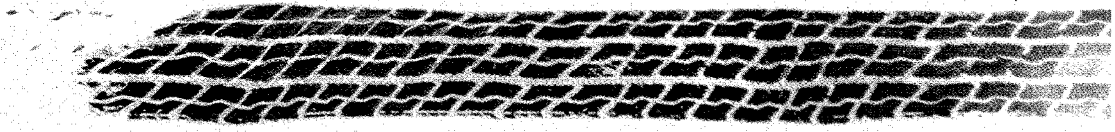

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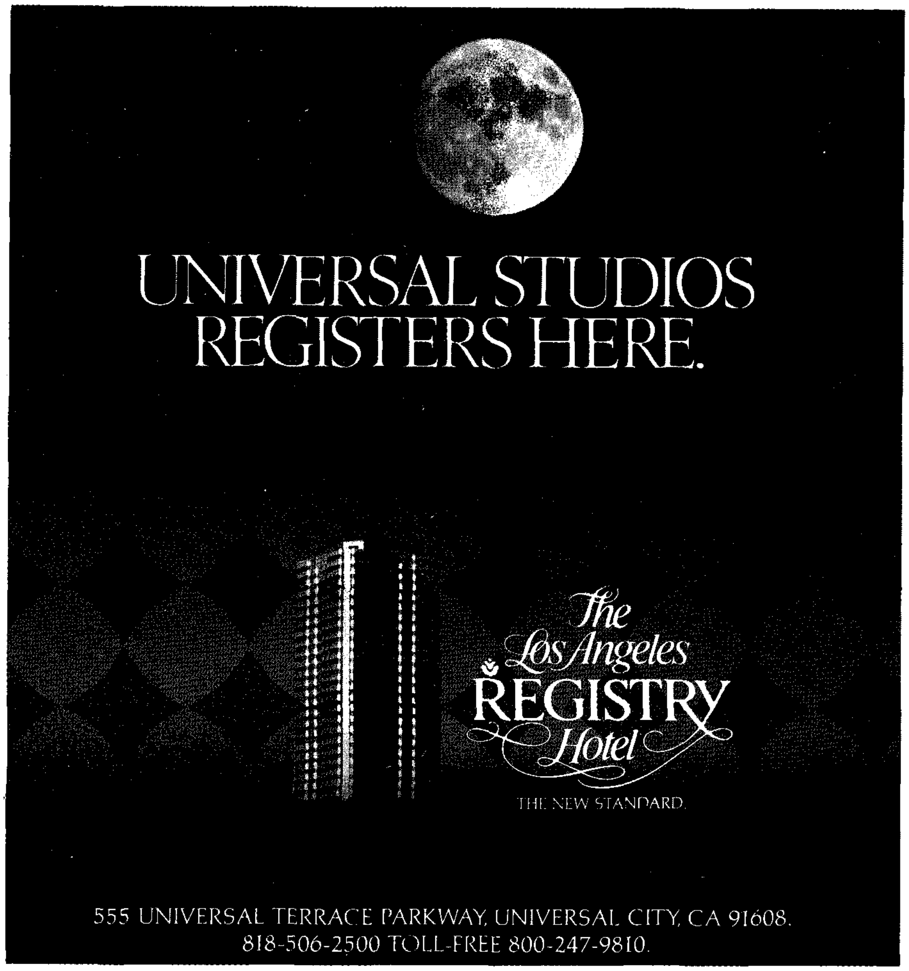
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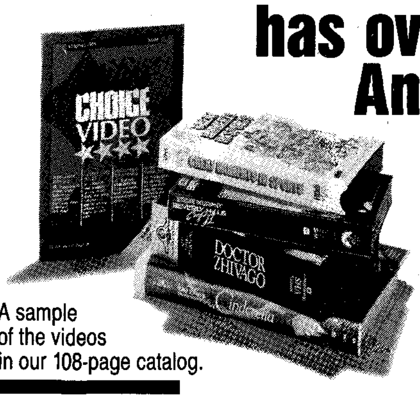
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and that, in the light of all this, he would certainly have to give it a whole new look. I've heard nothing since then, but I can guarantee you that a letter from Bernie to Doubleday will make them take a very close look at the project, and with both author and publisher wavering, Freddy could find himself heading back to square one. We shall see. . . .

Gary Bostwick is a forty-seven-year-old man of unexceptional appearance—he is plump, wears a shaggy mustache, and has small eyes behind wire-frame glasses—who immediately strikes one as a man of exceptional decency, good humor, and quickness of mind. If McGinniss's chief problem as defendant was his letters to MacDonald, a close second in bad breaks was the drawing of Bostwick as opposing counsel. "I love juries," Bostwick often says. More to the point, juries love him. Jurors sit there presumably weighing evidence but in actuality they are studying character. They miss little. When I spoke to the jurors of the MacDonald-McGinniss case and asked them their impressions of the two lawyers, they offered a low opinion of Kornstein, derived in large part from the way he frequently humiliated a young associate; in one instance, the associate made what Kornstein perceived as a mistake while examining a witness, and Kornstein peremptorily ordered him to sit down. Bostwick's behavior, in contrast, had been impeccable, the jurors reported. A question that was asked by many people during the trial and after was: How could such a good man have taken on such a terrible client—a client who had murdered his wife and children and now had the gall to sue a reputable author for writing a book about him that he didn't like? This was the sort of case, it was felt, that would attract the lowest sort of contingency-fee hustler, not an attorney of probity and reputation. Although Bostwick—who was not working on a contingency basis but at his regular rates—was never able to change this view of the case as it was reflected in the newspapers, on the radio, and on television, he succeeded in causing five (out of the six) jurors and an alternate to accept his version of the MacDonald-McGinniss encounter as a sort of Conradian fable of moral failure, and of the trial as a necessary ritual of retribution.

On the face of it, one would have thought that Bostwick's task was extremely difficult, if not impossible. It is one thing to call Lord Jim to account for his betrayal of the trust of the innocent pilgrims aboard his ship, and another to try a journalist for his sins against a man convicted of a crime so horrible that it renders the journalist's sins innocuous in comparison. But among the many curiosities and surprises of this curious and surprising lawsuit was the ease with which Bostwick was able to make his case, and the difficulty that Kornstein had with his. As Kornstein must have been dismayed to learn, having a murderer for your adversary does not give you an automatic advantage. Kornstein's strategy of constantly reminding the jury of MacDonald's conviction did not serve him well. The jurors said they held this against him, feeling it an insult to their intelligence. (They were nudged toward this reaction by Bostwick, who, in his final argument, compared Kornstein's constant references to MacDonald as "the convicted murderer" to a detergent commercial in which the word Oxydol "was mentioned twenty-seven times in three minutes, so that people would not forget that Oxydol was the thing to buy.")

But there may be a deeper reason for the jurors' almost bovine equanimity in the face of MacDonald's crime. This reason can be stated as a corollary to society's need to punish the transgressor, which is the need to forgive the transgressor. The crime of murder is one we have all committed in our (conscious and unconscious) imaginations. We have all dreamed about the violent deaths of our families; we have all said about people we love "I could kill him" (or her). In our old literature, we have Medea, Clytemnestra, and Oedipus acting out these fundamental fantasies; more recently, and thus more veiledly, we have Raskolnikov killing his mother and his sister through the murder of two strangers. And as we need to be punished and then absolved of our guilt, so do we punish and then absolve those who actually do what we only dream of doing. One of the unsolved mysteries of the case was McGinniss's preternatural hardness toward MacDonald both in his book and in the statements he made to the press after its publication. As the trial went on, it was this hardness—McGinniss's apparent incapacity for feeling compassion for MacDonald—rather than MacDonald's crime, that came to seem monstrous to the jurors. One of them, a young black woman named Sheila Campbell, articulated this feeling to me. "The part I didn't like was when MacDonald let McGinniss use his condominium, and McGinniss took it upon himself to find the motive for the murders," she said. "I didn't like the fact that McGinniss tried to find a motive for a book that was a best-seller, and that's *all* he was concerned about. He wasn't concerned about MacDonald as a human being whatsoever. He said he had feelings for Colette and the kids. But when are you going to start forgiving someone even if they did commit the crime? Are you going to torture the man for the rest of his life?"

MacDonald's own appearance at the trial did nothing to dissuade anyone from thinking of him as a person worthy of forgiveness. Dressed in a subdued business suit, he sat quietly at the plaintiff's table, and the association of this sobersided man with the straight-arrow Bostwick gave the jurors further permission to regard MacDonald's crime and punishment as a closed book, and to see him as a kind of nearly, if not fully, redeemed soul, who had suffered, whom it was not their place to judge, and whose punishment by McGinniss had been excessive and unfair.

Bostwick's punishment of McGinniss, on the other hand—his relentless and pitiless interrogation—seemed neither excessive nor unfair to the jurors, they reported, nor inconsistent with his persona as a good man. With the flaming sword he had been handed in the form of McGinniss's letters, he had no trouble playing the role of avenging angel. "It is a case about a false friend," he dramatically announced in his opening statement. What he did not articulate to the jurors but what a reader of the transcript cannot help noting is the (in this case) ironic parallel between the methods of trial lawyers and of journalists. The devastating narrative that Bostwick spun out of McGinniss's heedless epistolary chatter was like the narrative that a journalist spins out of a subject's careless talk during an interview. As the subject blathers on and on, apparently oblivious of the notebook or tape recorder that is catching the words on which he is later to be impaled, so McGinniss was apparently oblivious of the consequences of leaving behind a written record of his intimacy with MacDonald, with whom he evidently felt so comfortable that he could confide in him his secrets from "the wonderful world of publishing"—like a businessman confiding the details of the day's deals to a trusted mistress. And just as the subject, after the book or article comes out, will desperately attempt to unsay the things he wishes he had not said to the journalist, so, at the trial, did McGinniss attempt to repudiate his letters to MacDonald. " 'Total strangers can recognize within five minutes that you did not receive a fair trial,' " Bostwick read aloud from McGinniss's first letter to MacDonald. He then turned to McGinniss and said, "You didn't really believe that he didn't receive a fair trial, did you?" McGinniss replied, "Well, I'm sure that that was an oversimplification, and indeed it misstates the total strangers. How

could they recognize anything within five minutes?" The transcript continues:

> Q: I don't know. Why did you tell him that?
>
> A: I don't know. Because, you know, Mr. Bostwick, when I write a letter it's like making a phone call. You just—
>
> Q: You talk about what's in your heart, right?
>
> A: You talk about—it's not like writing for publication.
>
> Q: You say what comes to mind—isn't that right? What you really feel?
>
> A: You take less care with the way you phrase things.

Bostwick's own carefully shaped narrative hewed close to its theme of cold betrayal. He relentlessly hammered home the idea that McGinniss's deception of MacDonald had been a matter of simple opportunism, and that the letters had been written in utter cynicism—to get material out of MacDonald and to lull any suspicions he might have which could imperil McGinniss's project. To nail down his harsh thesis, Bostwick prefaced his reading of excerpts from the letters with a reading of excerpts from newspaper interviews that McGinniss had given during his publicity tour for "Fatal Vision," in which, evidently thinking himself safe from the vengefulness of a man locked up for life, he spoke of MacDonald with frank loathing. ("He is a very sick human being," he told one reporter, and, in response to another reporter's question, fixed the time of his realization of MacDonald's guilt as actually occurring during the trial.)

Kornstein, in his friendly examination of McGinniss, three weeks later, did what he could to repair the damage. On the fair assumption that deceiving a few journalists during a book tour was a lesser offense than deceiving MacDonald for four years, Kornstein had McGinniss testify that he had misinformed the reporters. "Statements by me that I was convinced of MacDonald's guilt before the jury came back were not accurate reflections of the way things really were," McGinniss said, at Kornstein's prodding, and went on, "I just gave some simplistic shorthand answers which, no question about it, in two or three instances created an impression which is not—it's the way I wished it had been, more than the way it was." Kornstein also asked McGinniss, "In those letters in 1979, did you genuinely feel every emotion that you expressed?"

> A: Yes, sir, I felt every emotion I expressed. I'm not that good a writer to fake something like that.
>
> Q: Was there anything in those letters that you intended to be false?
>
> A: Nothing I intended to be false.
>
> Q: Was there anything in those letters that you intended to deceive MacDonald with?
>
> A: If we're talking about these first six or nine months, no, sir. They were honest expressions of feelings that I had at the time.

In his cross-examination, Bostwick went straight for the exposed throat:

> Q: You said yesterday . . . looking at the letters of the first six to nine months after the trial, [that] you never intended to deceive him. . . . *After* the first six to nine months, did you intend to deceive him?
>
> A: Well, there certainly came a time when I was willing to let him continue to believe whatever he wanted to believe, so he wouldn't try to prevent me from finishing my book, yes, sir.
>
> Q: Is the answer yes?
>
> A: The answer could be interpreted that way, I suppose.
>
> Q: By someone reading the letters, for instance.
>
> A: Well, I'm sure it would be by yourself, sir. I don't know—other people might interpret it differently.

Bostwick went on to read from a letter from McGinniss to MacDonald dated April 14, 1982, written soon after MacDonald had been reincarcerated following an eighteen-month spell of freedom. (In July, 1980, the Fourth Circuit Court had ruled favorably on MacDonald's appeal that he had been denied a speedy trial, and he was released. Then, in March, 1982, the Supreme Court overturned the lower court's decision, and MacDonald went back to jail.) Bostwick continued, "Mr. McGinniss, you told your wife you were glad he was back in jail. Two weeks later, in this letter, you're telling him that you hope you'll be able to call him at home. Why?"

> A: As I've already testified, I believe because I was encouraging him to not discourage me from finishing the book that I had put so much of my life into at that point. My commitment was to the book and to this truth.
>
> Q: And it was O.K. to tell him something that you really didn't believe in the service of this truth?
>
> A: I would say that falls into Mr. Wambaugh's category of untruth.

McGinniss's reference to Wambaugh's "category of untruth" concerned what everyone later agreed was the pivotal moment of the trial. As the cornerstone of his defense of McGinniss, Kornstein had gathered together a roster of well-known writers—members of what he called "the literary community," and Bostwick less delicately, if perhaps more accurately, called "the writing industry"—to come and testify that McGinniss's deception of MacDonald was standard operating procedure. Kornstein's original list of "experts on the author-subject relationship" included William F. Buckley, Jr., Tom Wolfe, Jimmy Breslin, Victor Navasky, J. Anthony Lukas, and Wambaugh, but only Buckley and Wambaugh actually testified; after their appearance, the judge, evidently feeling that the defense had taken enough punishment from itself, called a halt, and decreed that no more writers would be heard from.

Buckley came first. Kornstein asked him, "Based on custom, practice, and usage within the literary community and your own experience, what is the scope of the author's discretion to encourage self-deception on the part of the subject?"

> A: Well, there again, that's an artistic question. If Senator [Alan] Cranston, let's say, while I was writing a biography about him, began to make references that sounded to me as though he had another wife living in Florida, I would from time to time return to that subject to encourage him to give me more details, but I wouldn't alert him to the fact that I was suddenly discovering that he was a bigamist. . . .
>
> Q: Again, based on custom, practice, and usage within the literary community and your own experience, would it be appropriate or inappropriate to perhaps feign agreement with the principles of the subject in order to encourage further conversation?
>
> A: Well, I think it would be appropriate, given the priorities. The priorities are to encourage the person you're writing about to tell you everything, and if that takes going down to a bar and having a beer with him, you go down to the bar and have a beer with him. If it means that you have to listen to three hours of boring, trivial matter of really no concern, you go ahead and do that. It's part of the ordeal of a

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writer in seeking to get all the facts, on the basis of which he makes his definitive evaluations.

In his cross-examination, Bostwick got right down to his enjoyable business:

> Q: You're not trying to tell the jury that you believe that an author can lie to the subject of a book that he's writing about, are you?
>
> A: Well, it all depends on what you mean by the word "lie."
>
> Q: A lie is a false statement of fact, Mr. Buckley. I'm sorry you're having such a difficulty—
>
> A: Well, look, look, look—
>
> Q: I can try to give you the definition of the word "lie."
>
> A: Look, it's not that easy. I've read Sissela Bok's book on lying, and it's not that easy. For instance, if the Gestapo arrives and says, "Was Judge Rea here? Where did he go?," and I said, "Well, he went that way," am I lying? Thomas Aquinas would say I was lying, a lot of other people would say I wasn't lying, I was simply defending an innocent life.

Bostwick continued to nudge Buckley toward the minefield.

> Q: I'm simply asking you whether it's the custom and practice in the literary field for authors to lie to the subject in order to get more information out of them.
>
> A: It would really depend on the situation. If, for instance, you were writing a book on somebody who was a renowned philanderer and he said, "I mean, you do think my wife is impossible, don't you?," you might say, "Yeah, I think she's very hard to get along with," simply for the purpose of lubricating the discussion in order to learn more information. . . .
>
> Q: So if you have to, you'd go down and have a beer with the guy to get more information, right?
>
> A: Yeah, right.
>
> Q: And if you have to [you'll] listen to three hours of boring talk from the person to try to get more out of them, right?
>
> A: That's right.
>
> Q: And if you have to, you'll tell him something you don't really believe in order to be able to get more information from him, isn't that right?
>
> A: Yes. That is right, understood in context.

Kornstein put Wambaugh through the same paces as he had put Buckley, and Wambaugh, astonishingly—as if he were not the same person who had written MacDonald such a bluntly honest letter—testified that misleading subjects was a kind of sacred duty of writers.

> Q: Is there a custom or practice in the literary world about whether or not an author should disclose his views to his subject?
>
> A: I believe that one should never disclose one's views, because it may shut off further communication.
>
> Q: Has that ever happened in your experience?
>
> A: Yes. Frequently [subjects] would ask me questions that if I answered them truthfully would shut off further communication.
>
> Q: And how did you answer them?
>
> A: I would tell an untruth if I had to.
>
> Q: Can you give us an example?
>
> A: Yes. In writing "The Onion Field," I can recall one of the murderers asking me if I believed him when he said he didn't shoot the policeman, and I at that time had interviewed scores of witnesses and had a mountain of information, and I did not believe him, but I said that I did, because I wanted him to continue talking. Because my ultimate responsibility was not to that person, my responsibility was to the book.

In his cross-examination, Bostwick asked Wambaugh, "Would you tell an untruth here today?" Wambaugh replied, "No, sir."

> Q: Why would you tell an untruth then but not now?
>
> A: I wasn't under oath, to begin with.
>
> Q: That's the difference?
>
> A: No, sir. My job was to get at the truth for the purposes of telling a coherent story, so I had to encourage that person to do it. May I describe the difference between untruth and lie?

The distinction Wambaugh proposed—"A lie is something that's told with ill will or in bad faith that is not true," while an untruth is "part of a device wherein one can get at the actual truth"—only handed Bostwick another weapon. In his closing address to the jury, he was able to say mockingly, "Wambaugh—he was interesting. I was intrigued by his definition of lie and untruth, and it was just something about the way he did it that makes me think you might be, too. I'm not sure. *I* would always try to say, whenever I got caught telling a lie, 'Well, I really didn't mean it. It really wasn't a bad lie.' " Turning his attention to Buckley, Bostwick observed, "Now, Buckley didn't know what a lie was, actually. We had an interesting conversation about St. Thomas Aquinas and Sissela Bok, but he wasn't sure what it was. My mother would have taught him if she were here, I'll tell you."

The debacle of Buckley's and Wambaugh's testimony illustrates a truth that many of us learn as children: the invariable inefficacy of the "Don't blame me—everybody does it" defense. Society mediates between the extremes of, on the one hand, intolerably strict morality and, on the other, dangerously anarchic permissiveness through an unspoken agreement whereby we are given leave to bend the rules of the strictest morality, provided we do so quietly and discreetly. Hypocrisy is the grease that keeps society functioning in an agreeable way, by allowing for human fallibility and reconciling the seemingly irreconcilable human needs for order and pleasure. When Buckley and Wambaugh said bluntly that it's all right to deceive subjects, they breached the contract whereby you never come right out and admit you have stretched the rules for your own benefit. You do it and shut up about it, and hope you don't get caught, because if you are caught no one—or no one who has any sense—will come forward and say he has done the same thing himself. When Kornstein, in his closing statement, said, "Buckley and Wambaugh testified that the task is to get the story, and that you do what is necessary to get the story," he was simply inviting the crushing lecture on decency that Bostwick was all too pleased to read him in *his* final argument. "What you heard here this morning was truly outrageous," Bostwick said, and went on:

> What's outrageous is that the defendant here, supposedly the protector of the First Amendment freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of expression—has put experts on the stand who said, in Mr. Kornstein's own words, that they must do whatever is necessary to write the book. Those were the words that he used: "whatever is necessary."
>
> Those words have been used by dictators, tyrants, demagogues throughout history to rationalize what they have done. . . . We've just gone through a series of Congressional investigations where that was also one of the excuses: We had to do what was necessary. It was all right to lie, because it was necessary.
>
> The experts said it's all right to tell the man something you don't believe in, as long as you're getting more information from him, for the sake of the project. I

listened throughout the two and a half hours, astounded that that would be set forth in a courtroom as being the kind of principle that writers or lawyers or juries should be guided by. We cannot do whatever is necessary. We have to do what is right.

• •

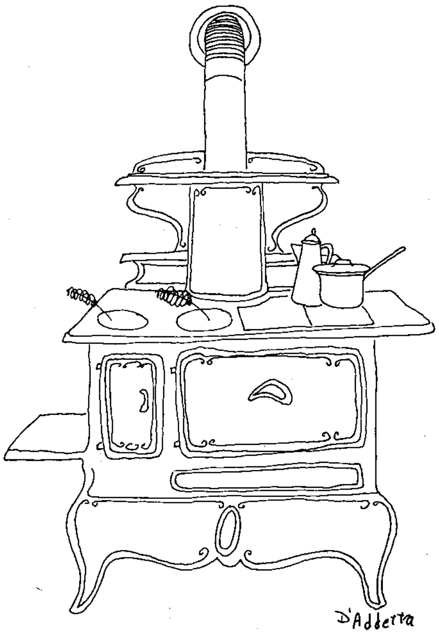
ON November 23, 1987, three months after the end of the trial, an agreement to settle the suit was reached, whereby McGinniss, conceding no wrong, pledged to give MacDonald three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars, to be paid by an anonymous party, presumably the insurance company of McGinniss's publisher. I happened to be in Los Angeles on the day of the settlement—actually, in Bostwick's office, reading court documents. Since the day that McGinniss called from Williamstown to break off our talks, I had been in a state of odd uncertainty about how to proceed. Odd, because in the past reporting had been something I did instinctively and easily: it was like going to the store before dinner to gather the ingredients for what you were going to cook. But with this project nothing was instinctive or easy. The store, which hitherto had been a vast, glutted American supermarket, had shrunk to a bare little grocery in a Third World country. I couldn't get my hands on anything. McGinniss had broken off relations with me, Kornstein never answered my telephone calls, McGinniss's friends wouldn't speak with me, and even the court stenographer from whom I had ordered a transcript of the trial seemed to be part of what I began to think of as a conspiracy of fate; she was never in her office, and the transcript didn't come and didn't come. As I waited for it, back in New York, I would sometimes walk over to the building where Kornstein had his office (it happened to be two blocks from where I lived) and peer wistfully into the lobby. As I fretted, I also ruminated about what had happened between me and McGinniss. What had I done to cause the man to think of me as another persecutor, rather than simply as a colleague who had come to discuss issues of common interest raised by his lawsuit? I realized that I had been unimaginative. When one is feeling as beleaguered as McGinniss must have been feeling, anything short of utter, empathic agreement will seem hostile and unfeeling. When one is in pain, one wants sympathy and reassurance, not abstract argument. And when one has maintained—as McGinniss and Kornstein and Buckley and Wambaugh had maintained—that the whole future of journalism may depend on the writer's freedom to dissemble, because otherwise the subject will flee, then one is fairly obliged to flee from a writer who doesn't seem all that convinced of the rightness of your position. For McGinniss to continue our interviews in the face of my skepticism would have been to repudiate his own position. It was logically imperative that he break off our interviews and leave me as empty-handed as he believed he would have been left if he had told MacDonald his true thoughts.

Now, in Los Angeles, I felt the familiar stir of something I hadn't felt since my dismissal by McGinniss—something I recognized with delight, like the return of appetite after an illness. This was the feeling of gratified vanity that American journalism all but guarantees its practitioners when they are out reporting. In our society, the journalist ranks with the philanthropist as a person who has something extremely valuable to dispense (his currency is the strangely intoxicating substance called publicity), and who is consequently treated with a deference quite out of proportion to his merits as a person. There are very few people in this country who do not regard with rapture the prospect of being written about or being interviewed on a radio or television program. Even someone as smart and self-possessed as Bostwick said yes to me when I telephoned him from New York to ask if I could interview him and his client. His first step in the minuet was to say that his side of the lawsuit had not been fairly represented in the press, and that he hoped I would be more fair-minded. My first step, since I did not want to lose him and MacDonald as I had lost Kornstein and McGinniss, was to say that fairness was an ideal rather than something one could give or withhold at will—and anyway it was not a quality that writers had a very big stake in cultivating. He then murmured his appreciation of this "honest" answer—with which, of course, I had simply taken ingratiation to a higher level. Throughout my stay in California, I maintained the posture of the bluntly honest reporter who says what she thinks and never tells a Wambaughian untruth. I believe that the meaning (or meaninglessness) of this posture was completely understood by Bostwick and his associates, and, later, by MacDonald and his various friends and followers. I think that by the time I arrived on the scene everyone involved in the MacDonald-McGinniss lawsuit had become thoroughly familiar with the deepest structures of the journalist-subject encounter, and was under no illusions about a new journalist with a new cover story. But how many of us with no illusions left about the nature of romantic love will for that reason turn down a plausible lover when one comes along? Don't a rare few affairs *not* turn out badly? And isn't the latest lover invariably different in kind from all the previous ones?

In Bostwick's office, in Santa Monica, awaiting his return from Federal Court, I knew it wasn't only the fine California climate that was giving me such a feeling of well-being. The metaphor of the love affair applies to both sides of the journalist-subject equation, and the journalist is no less susceptible than the subject to its pleasures and excitements. In our talk and in the transcript of the trial, McGinniss had made a point of distinguishing between the reporting and the writing phases of the journalistic enterprise, speaking of them almost as if the one had nothing to do with the other, and as if the reporting and the writing were done by two different people. While this confession of doubleness was McGinniss's undoing at the trial—the contradiction between the nice guy who had lived in the fraternity house with MacDonald and had written to him in prison and the coldhearted "best-selling author" of "Fatal Vision" was simply too grotesque—it is in fact an accurate description of the general journalistic case. An abyss lies between the journalist's experience of being out in the world talking to people and his experience of being alone in a room writing. When the interviews are over and the journalist first faces the labor of writing, he feels no less resentful than the subject will feel when he reads the finished text. Having to make, but not being able to make up, the journalist has a knotty and never entirely solvable problem, which he tends to put off facing as long as possible. Sometimes the task seems particularly discouraging. In 1985, in answer to an interrogatory by the plaintiff, McGinniss wrote of "too many sleepless nights, too many terrible dreams, too many blank, dull, empty mornings spent staring out the back window of my house, cold coffee in hand, postponing for another minute, another five, another ten, the dreadful task of going back upstairs and again confronting the chilling realization which, against my will, was forming itself . . ." The realization was that MacDonald had murdered his wife and children; but no writer can read this passage without recognizing in it the feeling of not wanting to get to work on something that may not come out well—and McGinniss had special reason to feel anxious about how "Fatal Vision" would come out.

But now, as I sat in Bostwick's office, the problem of writing was for me, as it was for McGinniss in the early days of his encounter with MacDonald, like the problem of death: it did not interfere with the pleasures of the present. From Bostwick's repeated references to his mother in the trial transcript and from the sound of his friendly, Plains States voice on the telephone, I had formed an image of him as a distinctly salt-of-the-earth type, and had imagined his office as being fittingly unpretentious: a couple of amiably seedy rooms, say, over a diving-equipment-rental shop on a commercial drag. The actual Bostwick office, in a building at the westernmost end of Wilshire Boulevard, was a place of the most advanced and sleekly expensive design. Beyond a reception room where Mozart was playing on a tape deck and an elegantly dressed receptionist sat at a light-gray counter, a conference room furnished with a lacquer table and ten chairs of a vaguely Oriental design was visible through a glass wall, and beyond that was a breathtaking view of the Pacific, which looked as if it, too, had come from an authoritative postmodern design firm.

Bostwick had put a room at my disposal, where I could peruse a loose-leaf book of trial exhibits, which were not yet in the public domain, and had assigned an assistant to look after me; he himself was at the Federal Courthouse all morning, negotiating the McGinniss settlement. Toward noon, he called in to say that the case was settled. That evening, Bostwick, his wife, Janette (a pretty, delicately boned, soft-spoken woman, who is a Gestalt therapist), and I went out to dinner together at a restaurant near the office. The occasion had a light, celebratory atmosphere. Bostwick reminisced about the early days of the case. "I took a deposition from McGinniss in 1985, and after an hour in the room with him I knew we had him," he said. "I just rubbed my hands with glee from that day forward, because I knew what I could do on cross-examination. It wouldn't even have to be a very good cross-examination."



I was interested to see that, even though the lawsuit was settled, Bostwick was still in the grip of the dislike and contempt for the defendant which had informed his work in the courtroom. Evidently, to be a good trial lawyer you have to be a good hater. A lawsuit is to ordinary life what war is to peacetime. In a lawsuit, everybody on the other side is bad. A trial transcript is a discourse in malevolence.

"That first deposition was in New York," Bostwick went on, "and then, a year later, I followed it up with another, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, which is close to Williamstown. McGinniss had refused to come to New York for the second part of his deposition. He said, 'Last time, I was courteous to you and came to New York. This time, you're going to have to do it in Massachusetts.' The law says that you can't drag a person too far from his home, so I went. As it turned out, it was a great trip. It was late October, just after the Mets had won the World Series. My flight went right up the Hudson to Albany, and it was the most beautiful plane ride I've ever had. It was a crystal-clear day. From Albany I drove to Pittsfield. Kornstein had a much harder time getting there. He left Manhattan about the same time I left Los Angeles. It was more trouble for him than it was for me." Bostwick laughed. "Can you imagine lawyers posturing over this sort of thing—'Well, they won a victory on that one, making us go to Massachusetts'? That happens so much in this business you'd be shocked. People fight bitterly over these things, and then find themselves waist-deep in mud and asking themselves, 'How did I get here? What happened?' You acted like an ass, that's what happened. Sometimes I wonder about being a lawyer. I wasn't always one—I was a Peace Corps volunteer and a translator and an engineer and an Army officer first."

Bostwick traded his empty plate for his wife's half-full one, and as he took an appreciative forkful of blackened catfish he said, "McGinniss said he owed it to Colette and to the kids to write the book, but—as I said in my closing argument—it wasn't them he owed, it was the Bank of New England. If you read those letters to MacDonald, you'll see that he couldn't stop working on the book. He had taken the publisher's advance. He was compelled to do what he did, and he wasn't free to tell MacDonald the truth."

I asked if Bostwick didn't think it possible that McGinniss *had* been telling the truth in his letters to MacDonald—that he had loved him as well as hated him.

Bostwick, as if suddenly remembering that he was no longer in the courtroom and could relent toward his adversary without risk to his side, nodded agreement. "Things weren't simple for him. He had conflicted emotions."

Janette, who hadn't spoken very much, now said, "In my work, a patient will come in and say, 'This is the truth about me.' Then, later in the therapy, a significant and entirely opposite truth may emerge—but they're both true."

"It's the same with the judicial process," Bostwick said. "People feel that it's a search for truth. But I don't think that is its function in this society. I'm convinced that its function is cathartic. It's a means for allowing people to air their differences, to let them feel as if they had a forum. You release tension in the social body in some way, whether or not you come to the truth."

"But in a criminal trial," I said, introducing the subject to which every discussion of the MacDonald-McGinniss lawsuit inevitably leads, "isn't there only one truth? Didn't MacDonald either commit these murders or not commit them?"

"I don't believe he did," Bostwick said, "and I wouldn't have taken the case if I thought he had. I probably explained it best to my daughter when she started being harassed at school because of my involvement in the case. I said to her, 'Look, nobody knows. I'm not saying I *know* he didn't do it. Only God and Dr. MacDonald know, and neither of them is talking. But I *believe* he didn't do it."

At the trial, Bostwick had pressed McGinniss on his certainty that MacDonald had committed the murders, reading aloud a passage from "Fatal Vision" in which McGinniss, referring to MacDonald's mother, wrote, "There were too many things I could not say [to her], for instance that I knew her son had killed his wife and children." Then Bostwick said to McGinniss, "You don't really *know* he killed his wife and children, do you?" The exchange continued:

A: Well, I know that he's been convicted, and the conviction has been confirmed by every appeals court that's considered it.

Q: That's not what it says in here, though, Mr. McGinniss. That's why I asked you the question in your own words. You don't really *know*, do you?

A: I know to my own satisfaction, yes, after the four years of intensive investigation I did.

Q: Did you ever talk to anyone who you believe *knows* that Dr. MacDonald committed the crimes?

A: Well, the victims are dead. Can't talk to them. And I came to believe that MacDonald simply didn't tell the truth.

Q: Have you ever talked to anyone who *knows* that Dr. MacDonald committed the crimes?

A: Well, I think you're getting into an area of epistemology here, Mr. Bostwick.

Q: That's right. I agree with you.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you ever talk to anyone who knows?

A: I couldn't talk to Colette. Couldn't talk to Kimberly.

Q: Did you talk to anyone who *knows*, Mr. McGinniss?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Who did you talk to?

A: I talked to MacDonald.

Q: You know that he knows?

A: I know in my heart that he knows.

Q: Did he ever tell you that he did?

A: He certainly didn't.

Now, at the restaurant, Bostwick spoke of his own willingness to live with doubt. "Given the facts as I know them—and there's a lot of evidence on both sides—I prefer being uncertain to taking the easy way out and getting rid of my discomfort by being absolutely certain. I don't *know*, and no one on this earth can be absolutely certain of the truth here. Anyone who professes to be absolutely certain I really distrust." —JANET MALCOLM

(*This is the first part of a two-part article.*)

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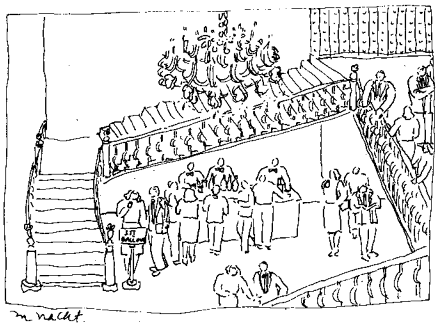
# THE THEATRE

## *Zaks Rides Again*

"LEND ME A TENOR," a farce by an American playwright, Ken Ludwig, opened at the Royale last week, after a run in London. The setting is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where Saunders, the general manager of the Grand Opera Company; his bullied assistant, Max, a fellow with vocal aspirations; and Saunders' pretty daughter, Maggie, are awaiting the arrival of Tito Merelli, a world-famous tenor, who is booked to sing the lead in "Otello" that evening. He is late for the dress rehearsal, and the atmosphere is frenzied. When he finally shows up, he is queasy and giddy, having overeaten and overdrunk on the way, but his flamboyance is undiminished. He has with him some pills to make him "relox," and inadvertently takes a double dose—possibly a fatal dose. At any rate, he lies on the bed, as limp as a fish. Fortunately, Merelli has brought along an extra costume and a good supply of makeup. Since surprise is the essence of farce, I'll try to be as sparing with the facts as possible.

Max loves Maggie, but she is determined to have a fling before taking any decisive step. There are plenty of doors, a couple of closets, and a living room, bedroom, and bath. Mistaken identity, cross-purpose conversations, jokey lines, and vintage hokum abound. There is a beautiful soprano, and a formidable woman who is chairman of the opera guild. The casting is expert in every instance, and the performance as a whole, under the direction of that alchemist Jerry Zaks, is near-perfection. The clowning of Philip Bosco, of all people, is a wonderful surprise, and so is the professional singing of Victor Garber, as Max. That both are good actors comes as no surprise at all. Tovah Feldshuh makes a smoldering comedy turn of the tenor's jealous wife, and J. Smith-Cameron is a delight as Maggie, an ingénue with a difference. I also admired and enjoyed Caroline Lagerfelt as the glamorous soprano and Jane Connell as the chairman of the opera guild. Ron Holgate is great as the great Merelli, and Jeff Brooks is highly satisfactory as a bellhop with a trick or two up his sleeve. Tony Walton designed the appropriately lavish, impersonal hotel suite. The show is a slow starter, but once aloft it never tumbles down.

GUS, of Albert Innaurato's comedy "Gus and Al," at Playwrights Horizons, is Gustav Mahler; Al is the dramatist himself, here portrayed as overweight, homosexual, invariably humorous, even when depressed, and still smarting from what he considers the unfavorable critical reception of his recent "Coming of Age in SoHo." (I remember the reviews as being pretty favorable on that one.) We first meet Al in New York, where he lives with an ape named Kafka, who operates a time machine. The time machine sends Al from the present back to Vienna in 1901, where he meets Mahler, another artist unappreciated in his time, whose music he loves, and with whom he is prepared to share the glooms. He shares more than that. He moves into the Mahler household—with the composer, now stuck on the last movement of his Fifth Symphony, his doting sister Justine, and a doting spinster named Natalie Bauer Lechner, who is writing his biography. Al is happy and comfortable until the dramatic entrance of—well, of course, Alma Schindler, that eminent disturber of peace and comfort, who marries Mahler, making him the first of her clutch of celebrated husbands. The action moves every which way, and the glooms disperse among funny scenes and witty lines, and touching ones, too. There is nothing smart or superficial about this dramatist; everything is heartfelt. Al meets Dr. Freud, a neighbor, who briefly considers treating him ("Do you have a private income?"), and he also meets Mahler's young gardener, who he realizes is his future grandfather—the affectionate grandfather of his early play "The Transfiguration of Benno Blimpie," another very personal work. The ending (New York, 1989) is happy.



"Gus and Al" is loose-limbed and at times is not as dramatic as it might be, but it finds Mr. Innaurato as audacious as ever, his temperament—the bleak lows, the funny highs—still rampant. The musical selections, always integral to his work, sound beautiful. Under the scrupulous direction of David Warren, Mark Blum (heavily padded) is fine as Al, and so is Sam Tsoutsouvas as Gus. Nothing but praise for Cara Duff-MacCormick as the spinster, Christina Moore as the sister, Jennifer van Dyck as glamorous Alma, Bradley White as the Italian gardener, and Charles Janasz as both the ape Kafka and Dr. Freud. James Youmans designed the spare, elegant set, Robert Jared the lighting, and David C. Woolard the elegant costumes. "Gus and Al" will run through March 26th.

—EDITH OLIVER

## *Symphony Space Break*

THERE may be any number of ways to read a story well, but there is only one way to read a story badly, and that is to try to find something in it to act. This is a conclusion I have come to over the last several years in the course of attending "Selected Shorts: A Celebration of the Short Story," a series of readings held annually at Symphony Space, the dilapidated old theatre at Broadway and Ninety-fifth Street, once a movie house, now a cultural center and an important fixture on Manhattan's Upper West Side. "Selected Shorts," which runs from late January to late May, on alternate Wednesdays, is a chance to hear actors reading short stories. It consists of ten evenings, each given up to several works, and juxtaposes classic and contemporary examples of the form. "Selected Shorts" doesn't present itself as an inquiry into the nature of literary form; anything so solemn-sounding would probably never occur to its creators, Kay Cattarulla, who produces the series, and Isaiah Sheffer, who directs it. But what happens when somebody within earshot of you sets stories by Saki and Ann Beattie, say, side by side—or stories by Deborah Eisenberg and V. S. Pritchett, as has happened this year—is that you find yourself thinking about things like what it is that makes a short story great and what it is that makes a fitting subject for a story in the first place.

When an actor at Symphony Space gives a great reading of a great story, there's nothing quite like the feeling of literary excitement it inspires. Not that the stories read at Symphony Space are always well chosen or well read: it's not always possible to tell if a story will benefit from being read aloud. What's more, not all actors know how to deliver a short story. But over time (the series is in its fifth year) the staff of Symphony Space has collected a stable of first-rate readers. Charles Keating and Roscoe Lee Browne (who must surely be among the greatest readers now living), Joanna Gleason, Maria Tucci, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Jerry Zaks, Joe Grifasi, Paul Hecht, and Steven Gilborn—these are all actors who know instinctively how to present a short story, for reading a story and playing a role are two different things. Drama and narrative may have in common the convention that they are based on—the fiction that the events they recount are true. But drama pretends to be presenting things that are happening now; the premise of narrative (even narrative written in the present tense) is that something once happened that somebody wants to tell you about. An actor in a play has to represent a specific point of view; at least part of his job is making us care about him in the person of the character he embodies. In the context of narrative, emoting, trying to make us care about him in any capacity is the worst thing an actor can do.

This fact was brought home to audiences at Symphony Space on a night during the second season of "Selected Shorts" when Raymond Carver served as host of a program and William Hurt gave a reading of Richard Ford's "Communist." The reading, which was broadcast on WNYC on Sunday, February 26th (each year, while "Selected Shorts" is in progress, a program based on previous seasons' readings is presented on public radio), is now available on audiocassette, Symphony Space having just made its first venture into the recording industry. Hurt's performance of "Communist" is excruciating. He endows the narrator of the story with a whole casebook of feelings and anxieties, as though playing a role. A passive actor at the best of times, Hurt seems to be trying to present the story by suffering for us. What's interesting about the performance is that there comes a moment—a barely perceptible pause, worlds apart from the forced pauses Hurt has been bunging into the text in an attempt to seem like a real person—when you actually hear the actor switching gears, realizing something about the story form. It occurs just after the phrase "What I want to explain . . ."

The best readers at Symphony Space are, typically, those who know that the only action they are meant to represent is that of having a story to tell, who understand that the audience is there to have an emotional experience, not to watch them having one. An actor who presents the kind of troubled persona that Hurt gives Ford's narrator—and Hurt reads throughout like one talking about things that are difficult for him to talk about—risks undermining the conventions on which fiction is based. Instead of "Why are you telling me this?" the question at the back of the listener's mind becomes "If it's so rough on you to talk about all this, why don't you give it up?" The narrator must remain a mystery to the listener—someone unfathomed and in control. Maria Tucci, when she reads aloud, is always in the background: everything in her bearing and manner suggests that she herself does not exist—only the story does. Joanna Gleason, reading, is nonchalant: she drives a story quietly, unconcernedly, the way one would drive a large, dependable car. Geraldine Fitzgerald seems similarly detached, never giving in to us but always keeping us in mind. Paul Sparer, reading Bernard Malamud's "The Model" two seasons ago, held the text of the story in his hand, smiling possessively, as though he had written it. Which is, in a way, the whole point.

If the task of theatre is to make an audience forget that the actor is not the person he pretends to be, the task of performances like those at Symphony Space is to make the audience forget that the actor himself is not the actual consciousness behind the story. But actors, with very few exceptions, need to be directed; otherwise they are likely to do all sorts of inappropriate things—as Hurt did—if only to prove that they are acting. Some of the performers at Symphony Space one would be sorry to see there again: Alvin Epstein (who, in the very first program, massacred "The Tell-Tale Heart," a story that a backward child would know how to perform), Marian Seldes and Tammy Grimes (who not only read appallingly but managed to turn the spotlight of the event on themselves). But there are few hard-and-fast rules when it comes to actors. Last year, John Rubinstein, who had done well by a wonderful story by Andre Dubus two seasons ago, ruined a Willa Cather story, and this season Estelle Parsons—usually such a good reader—gave a strangely ferocious reading of Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," almost shouting it at us.

Oddly, the best reading so far this season came from someone who is not an actor at all: A. Bartlett Giamatti, our new baseball commissioner, who last week, along with Roger Angell, presided over an evening of baseball writing and brought down the house with his essay "The Green Fields of the Mind." But that is the difference between fiction and nonfiction readings: rhetoric, on which the essay form largely depends, creates actors; narrative irony demolishes them. It was a great evening. And who cared that, strictly speaking, it presented not one line of fiction? Jack Davidson gave a masterly reading of "Hub Fans Bid Kid Adieu," John Updike's moving account of the last home run ever hit by the Red Sox' Ted Williams; Fritz Weaver, one of the Symphony Space regulars, reading Rolfe Humphries' poem "Polo Grounds," used his actorliness—the very quality that sometimes gets between the audience and whatever story he is reading—to prepare us mysteriously for the wonderful moment when the refrain "Time is of the essence" turns and begins to mean something else. Angell, underplaying his account of Game Six of the 1975 World Series, had everyone on the verge of tears. Only Stephen Lang, reading Garrison Keillor's "Attitude," a rumination on the etiquette of slow-pitch softball, seemed slightly off base. (It's arguable that the persona he adopted was too Runyon, not enough Keillor.) But by then everyone was having such a good time that it scarcely seemed to matter. At the end of Lang's reading, the crowd went wild and somebody whistled. I think it was me.

—Mimi Kramer

# DANCING

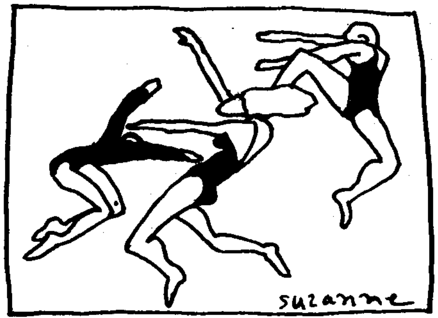
## *New York, New York*

YOU dressed as if you were going to church, with shoes shined and gloves on. You ate an early-bird lunch at Toffenetti's or the Brass Rail. You had an Orange Crush or some other fizzy kind of drink, and probably your mother did, too; in those days, nobody drank wine, not in the daytime, anyway. Then, the minute you joined the matinée crowds surging through Times Square, the fevers and humors of the afternoon began. Your show was "The King and I" or "Peter Pan" or "Gypsy" or "Fiddler on the Roof," and it almost certainly had kids in it the sight of whom caused the fizzy drink in your stomach to lurch in envy. Secretly, you laid plans for a career on the stage to start at the earliest possible moment. Step One was to purchase the original-cast album and learn it by heart if you hadn't done so already. You held contests with your sister as to who could sing "Have an egg roll, Mr. Goldstone" and not trip up in the double-time coda. When the movie of the show came out, you saw it, of course, but it was just a movie, and by this time you were in high school, writing songs and cooking up choreography for the senior gala, and what a wise old bird you were. The shows you had seen and were still seeing were in your blood. You could match Sondheim anytime you wanted to:

There's a place for us,
In outer space for us.

If the name Jerome Robbins meant anything to you, it stood for a kind of corporate efficiency, along with names like Comden and Green, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Merman and Martin. You stole all Robbins' ideas for the Advertising Man's Nightmare sequence in your senior show, but you never imagined that they were his ideas, or anyone's ideas, in the first place. On Broadway, it seemed, dream sequences were born in the national psyche; they involved about as much originality as the latest dance steps—shag or mambo or twist—which you could pick up in your sleep.

Eventually, you graduated from high school and had amnesia and assumed the identity of an intellectual. Oddly enough, the same thing seemed to have happened to Jerome Robbins. When the two of you woke up, it was at the ballet—you both wanted to be as far from middle-class family entertainment as you could possibly get. Here Robbins could be seen as an individual, a vulnerable, fallible artist. But his long absence from Broadway—his last production was "Fiddler," in 1964—only served to heighten the legendary reputation he enjoyed there. His successors—Gower Champion, Bob Fosse, Michael Bennett, acclaimed, in turn, as Broadway's resident genius—are all gone now, and the demise of the Broadway musical as we enter the nineties is made glaringly apparent by the spectacular flop of the latest homegrown product, "Legs Diamond." It's a propitious moment for the return of Jerome Robbins, but, notice, Jerome Robbins does not return to the Imperial Theatre with a new show—he returns with "Jerome Robbins' Broadway," a collection of high spots from his old shows, staged just as they were then. He returns with "The Small House of Uncle Thomas," from "The King and I," and "I'm Flying," from "Peter Pan," and "You Gotta Have a Gimmick," from "Gypsy," and numerous extracts from "Fiddler" and "West Side Story," arranged in suite form. There are set pieces from "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," and "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum." The show opens with sailors singing "New York, New York," from "On the Town," and closes with the "Where has the time all gone to?" song, from the same show. It is all precisely as you remembered it and as you scarcely can bear to remember yourself. But, after all, you were just a kid, and aren't kids what the classic Robbins musicals (and the classic Robbins ballets) are about?



In family entertainment, the target audience is between twelve and twenty, with a little something for parents, too. The forties and fifties—the Robbins decades—were capable of sophisticated musicals like "Kiss Me, Kate" and "Kismet" and "Candide," but those weren't dance shows in the full-scale Robbins sense, and it was the pervasive, storytelling use of dance that lay at the heart of Robbins' irresistible appeal to the family audience. Dancers are kids. On the Imperial stage we watch kids all evening long: as sailors, as flappers, as juvenile delinquents, as Mack Sennett Keystone Cops and Bathing Beauties, as Siamese children, as "Proteans"—the mimes and cutups of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum." In 1954, Robbins not only choreographs but adapts and directs the quintessential children's show, "Peter Pan." Ten years later, he directs and choreographs the quintessential parents' show, "Fiddler on the Roof." Its subject: marrying off daughters. Its theme song, destined from then on to be played and sung at weddings: "Sunrise, Sunset." (The behemoth of the era's kiddie shows, "The Sound of Music," was one that Robbins missed. But that was a show about singers, not dancers.) Robbins had presumably grown up in the intervening decade. But we may remember that it was he who, in the same year as "Peter Pan," staged the battle of the toy soldiers and the mice in Balanchine's first production of "The Nutcracker," and it wasn't long after "Fiddler" that he turned up again at New York City Ballet, where he has remained for more years than he spent on Broadway. This year, he is seventy. He has not grown up; he has just grown old in Never Never Land.

The raucous kindergarten of his youth hasn't dated, though I can remember a time when "On the Town" would have seemed as unpardonably old-fashioned as its progenitor, the ballet "Fancy Free," did, and when "The Small House of Uncle Thomas" would have been censored out of existence. The only reason it exists now is that we take it for a perfectly adorable, enchantingly naïve rendition of the sweet-tooth, Orange Crush taste of the fifties. The fact that it caricatures both Southeast Asians and black Americans—that part of it we swallow painlessly. Nostalgia is selective remembrance; it is history without chronology. In the fifties, shows like “The King and I” and “Peter Pan” were implicit rejections of smart, hard shows like “On the Town.” Here they all lie cozily side by side, and nothing intervenes between “Uncle Thomas” and “West Side Story,” the show that preached brotherhood, except an intermission. The packaging of “Jerome Robbins’ Broadway” feeds our current appetite for retrieved sensation, our taste for Taste. And our obsession with the fifties. Whether the fifties was your generation or your parents’, this is the show for you. It reveals, in the excerpts from “Billion Dollar Baby” and “High Button Shoes,” a nostalgia of its own for the teens and the twenties—but with what a difference! Robbins parodied the amusements of his parents’ generation in varying tones of affection and abuse; he wasn’t part of an industry that recycled them. The fifties were inclined to trample on the values of the past; the eighties are inclined to revere not the values so much as the past itself. No taste is the only taste to have—any vintage will do. The juvenile gangs of “West Side Story” actually looked more dated in 1957 than they do now. Now they look contemporary-recherché; then they looked like thirties modern-dance rebels seething with bottled-up emotion.

In New York City schools today, kids are armed with guns and hatchets, and they sell each other crack. Who would think of making a musical about this? But there’s no need to. Middle-class, genteel, anxiety-ridden New York theatregoers are still susceptible to the terrors of “West Side Story.” The Jets and the Sharks have only to assemble, and, oh, how quiet the room gets. Then the gangs start to move, and all you’re conscious of is the sleek athleticism, the controlled *beauty* of the violence. There’s one comic interlude, the snazzy but presumptuous “America,” and one lyrical interlude, the impossibly saintly “Somewhere.” “West Side Story” was Robbins’ moment of hubris. The false sentiment of it extends to the unfailing wonders of dance which it unfurls before us. What kind of supermen are these, who work themselves nightly into such lavish acrobatic frenzies? (The answer had to come in Michael Bennett’s “A Chorus Line,” a soap opera about dancers.)

By exaggerating its significance, Robbins actually demeaned dance in “West Side Story.” The true kinetic excitement of that show lay in the rhythm and momentum of its scenes, not in its dances. Every show Robbins directed had that kind of kinetic excitement, and “Jerome Robbins’ Broadway” has it, too, except when it stiffens to attention for recognized masterpieces like “West Side Story” and “Fiddler.” It has theatrical wisdom in such abundance that the inclusion of the trifling “Mr. Monotony,” a number dropped from two Irving Berlin shows, seems inexplicably whimsical. The song, one of Berlin’s less familiar novelties, consists of extended lines of repeated notes, and the lyrics tell of a boring trombone player whose girl leaves him for a gamier clarinettist. Robbins’ dance plays up the sexual triangle, with Luis Perez and Robert La Fosse miming their instruments and taking turns attracting Jane Lanier. It’s a good, tough, bluesy dance, slightly Freudian around the edges, but it doesn’t have anything to do with the idea of monotony, and you can see why it was never used. I take its presence here to be a tribute to Berlin.

The show is a display of theatrical arts and crafts, and honors many people besides Jerome Robbins. No choreographer or director could have done what Robbins did without writers and composers to feed him material and designers to augment it. His collaborators on the present show, Robin Wagner, Joseph G. Aulisi, Jennifer Tipton, and Paul Gemignani, insure that scenic design, costumes, lighting, and musical direction are up to the old standards. The cast of sixty-two dancers, all seasoned performers, was rehearsed for six months. It shows, though I can’t think why Robbins felt he needed La Fosse and Alexia Hess to play, among other roles, the lovers in “On the Town” and “West Side Story.” There are show dancers and ballet dancers, and these two, from the gentler world of ballet, have difficulty projecting themselves in the Broadway manner. Billed as “Narrative Continuity,” Jason Alexander is the evening’s scene-setter, ringmaster, danseur d’occasion, and Zero Mostel, and he is thoroughly professional about it all. The evening never for one second slips out of focus. It canonizes Robbins and the Robbins era the way “That’s Entertainment” canonized Gene Kelly and M-G-M. It may very well become a big enough hit to prompt a sequel, the way “That’s Entertainment” did—Lord knows, Robbins has the goods. Whatever happens, the thing not to look for is a renaissance of the dance musical. Everyone thought that the success of “That’s Entertainment” would bring back the movie musical, and look what we got: music videos.

“APOLLO” as we have it today, without a set or a prologue that shows the birth of Apollo or an ending that shows his ascent to Parnassus, is a ballet that describes artistic creation without the circumstances of myth. Apollo is no longer the “wild, half-human youth” born of Leto on her high rock on the island of Delos; he no longer needs to be released from his swaddling clothes or taught how to play the lute. The birth scene, at night under the stars, had a homely ceremoniousness, a gawky *primitif* quality, that only Balanchine could have imagined. And only Balanchine in 1979 would have seen any reason to delete it. But the real damage is to the ending. A staircase set made it possible for Apollo and the three Muses literally to ascend to another level in the apotheosis. And since the choreography leading to the apotheosis describes a process of transfiguration during which all four become indivisibly united, we need to see their emergence at the end of the process depicted as a separate event. What we now have for an ending—the sunburst of arabesques—is undeniably beautiful and moving, and it was enhanced this season at New York City Ballet by a flood of gold-and-blue lighting. But the sunburst isn’t an outcome of the transfiguration process—it’s a climactic stage in that process. Balanchine moved the sunburst from its rightful place and made it stand for what, in its humble way, used to be even more beautiful and moving: the long, still pose in profile on the stairs.

Stravinsky used the title “Apotheosis” to cover all the music that constitutes the last section of the ballet, marked *largo e tranquillo*, but the ear really hears two successive and complete musical events: rising music that builds in a crescendo, then suddenly calm “walking” music that gradually

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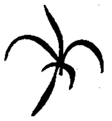
broadens, slows, and becomes still. To the rising music Balanchine set dance images of enormous metaphoric power, beginning with Apollo touching his hand to the assembled toetips of the Muses as they extend their legs from a reclining position on the floor, and continuing with a passage in which he links arms with them one by one and raises them, chain fashion. This leads to the forming of a group, and the group to the forming of a bridge, and to the group's passing, still with linked arms, one by one beneath it, at the same time passing across the stage like a rolling coil. (The fusion of the arts was Diaghilev's noblest ideal; "Apollo," produced by him in 1928, was the first and only ballet to express the ideal entirely in choreography.) The transfiguration sequence comes—or used to come—to a peak in the sunburst: Dance, Poetry, and Mime branch from Music as rays from the sun. Then, to a further development in Stravinsky's crescendo, there came a further development in the choreography: the moment of dedication, or consecration, as the Muses threw themselves in lunges to the floor with Apollo drawing them ever forward, holding all their hands gathered in his. The lunges were the last of the great dance images in the ballet. From that point the dancers walked, one following another, along the back of the stage and then up the stairs, where they held a pose until the curtain fell. The ballet thus reverted to the humility of the opening scene. Ending, as it now does, on the sunburst, it is a touch grandiose. And it reverses the order of the two climaxes, so that the transfiguration reaches its peak after the consecration to which it led has come about. (The ending of "The Four Temperaments" is a grand-scale restatement of the apotheosis of "Apollo," with everything happening in the right sequence.)



Balanchine's basic intention, of course, was to eliminate the pantomimic prologue, leaving the ballet standing on dance structure alone. After fifty years of purifying the art, he was entitled to do so, and to his way of thinking "Apollo" was ripe for purification. But eliminating the prologue doesn't make a purer "Apollo"—it makes a statement about "Apollo." Scenery is necessary only to the prologue and the apotheosis. By discarding the set but retaining the Muses' emblems and Apollo's kitchen stool, Balanchine created a skeletal "Apollo"—one that sacrificed along with the fat of mythic embellishment the flesh of transcendent narrative. The choreographer never explained his motives for making these changes. "Who cares that someone is born!" was his retort to critics who questioned his revisions. True, where Apollo comes from is not as important as where he goes. Probably Balanchine would have retained the original ending if he could have done so without a set.

The purification of "Apollo" was an anniversary tribute to the ballet. But it was also something more: an attempt to turn the role of Apollo into an appropriate vehicle for Peter Martins. Martins had danced Apollo, to Suzanne Farrell's Terpsichore, for the first time in 1967, when he was twenty years old. In 1969, Farrell left the company, and the ballet was dropped. It was presented during the 1972 Stravinsky Festival, but Jacques d'Amboise, who had originated the role in the 1957 revival, danced it, with Kay Mazzo as Terpsichore. Martins had danced it earlier that season, and after that the ballet was again dropped. It was revived, in truncated form, only after Farrell had become available to dance it again. Baryshnikov was then a member of New York City Ballet, and he danced the first few performances, opposite Heather Watts. But, as Balanchine foresaw, our idea of Apollo and Terpsichore in the eighties would be founded on Martins and Farrell, and Martins was as far from Balanchine's original conception as Farrell was central to it. Balanchine had made this very clear years before in published comments about the ballet: "'Apollon Musagète' is not Apollo Belvedere; he is the wild, half-human youth who acquires nobility through art." Martins in looks, bearing, and stature was the very image of Apollo Belvedere, and he had now outgrown the prologue. But he—and only he—could partner Farrell, so Balanchine changed the terms in which he saw the role. Cutting the prologue helped make Peter Martins a more credible Apollo.

This winter brought two new Apollos, both very much in the Martins mold: Lindsay Fischer and, returning after a leave of absence, Peter Boal. Both dancers understood what they had to do, though they had trouble doing it at first. Part of the problem with the danseur-noble interpretation of Apollo is that Apollo is also a jazz dancer. By the end of the season, Boal had grasped the dynamics of the choreography and was becoming luminous. Fischer I didn't see enough of; unfortunately, he was forced out with an injury, which meant that his Terpsichore, Darci Kistler, was forced out, too. Kistler, like Boal, is a dancer who tends to sketch the first time out in a role and needs repeated performances to grow. This season saw her more or less gloriously nascent as Terpsichore, in "Concerto Barocco," and as the Waltz Girl in "Serenade." As Titania in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" she was in full bloom, and David Otto was responsive as her cavalier. I'll not soon forget the sight of her reposing in a high lift as he carried her across the stage. Kistler's plastic intelligence is different from that of anybody else who has danced the part, and Kistler herself is "different," in a very special and potentially eventful way. Whether she will bring about the next large-scale development in ballerina style or only pose an alternative to it, as she has been doing, is a question the company has yet to face.

Kyra Nichols' firm command of the style gives me great pleasure every time I see her, but Nichols is at her greatest when she gets a role that shakes her up and makes her a little breathless. This season, it was "Donizetti Variations." In "Mozartiana," she was in control but not in command. Damian Woetzel was Nichols' partner in both those ballets, outdoing himself in daring and skill and imaginative sympathy. Woetzel distinguished himself in general, in ballet after ballet, so much so that the management took the unusual step of promoting him in midseason. Only twenty-one, he is at a dizzying high point in his career. Time will tell whether he can combine his gift for pleasing audiences with the more expansive, more serious classical style that he has it in him to develop.

Jeffrey Edwards' début as Oberon in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" gave the role what it has long needed—classical discipline, weight, and brio. His mime had dignity and humor. He looked like a young god. His only problem seemed to be stamina. Edwards' rise in the repertory has been mainly through "Bournonville Divertissements" and nuggety classical roles choreographed for him by Martins. Not enough there to build the strength needed for Balanchine bravura. I don't think Edwards ever danced the third movement of "Symphony in C" or "Stars and Stripes," while the dancers who do get those roles dance Puck, not Oberon. This season, there was a new Puck in Michael Byars, a new Hippolyta in Wendy Whelan, and two good casts of lovers. Titania's court, Bottom (Laurence Matthews) and friends, bugs, bees, hounds—all were exemplary. The whole ballet looked restored. In the first act, the lovers' quarrels were again a danced episode, with fresh and subtle mime details. The airy divertissement in the second act, led by Merrill Ashley and Adam Lüders, was as if danced about six inches off the ground. The Balanchine-Stravinsky "Symphony in Three Movements" also returned in good shape, with another roster of fine débuts. Not every ballet was at its best, and the season had its share of failures. But the company looked more itself than it has in some time.

THE Donetsk Ballet, from the Ukraine, was here for an unexpected five-day run. This is the company that was stranded in Baltimore when its American sponsors, disappointed at not getting the dancers they'd requested, withdrew their funds. A rescue operation mounted by the Howard Gilman Foundation and ICM Artists brought the dancers to the City Center. Two days after they opened, Donetsk jokes were circulating. "How do you like the Russian dancers?" "Donetsk." There is a misery particular to provincialism in ballet; there is a particular misery to Soviet provincialism. The Donetsk presented a full-length "Giselle" (for which American Ballet Theatre lent some scenery) and various classical excerpts. The "Giselle" was danced entirely from the knees down—I suppose in the interests of period style. The excerpts, of which I was able to see only "Paquita" and "Don Quixote," exhibited no such restraint, though rigid backs were the norm there, too. Soviet dancers on lucrative American tours come and go pretty much as they please these days. The ones who came with this group included a few who were decently trained. But all of them got an indulgent reception. Dollars to Donetsk they'll be back. —ARLENE CROCE

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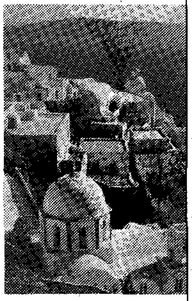
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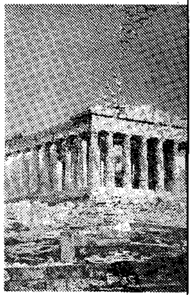
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SOME admirers of Thomas (Tip) O'Neill may prefer to have him associated with judgments he has issued on historic events in which he played a prominent role during his thirty-four years in the House of Representatives, ten of them as House Speaker. Still, it seems likely that his comment "All politics is local" will be the one that turns up beside his name in the familiar-quotation books. The political truism was even truer before 1937, when, in its opinion upholding the Social Security Act, the United States Supreme Court called attention to the clause in the Constitution that lists, among congressional responsibilities, providing for the general welfare—which local officials used to have to get up most of the money for. Richard Croker, the Tammany boss here at the turn of the century, on being urged by a clubhouse pal to get a relative appointed as county clerk, is supposed to have said, "I'm sorry, but that job takes brains and experience. He'll have to be satisfied with going to Congress." The view that all politics is local was even more valid in 1953, when O'Neill first took his seat in the House, than it is today, when the President, United States senators, and other Washington figures are more likely to be regular presences in the family living room than are mayors and city-council members. In this heavily Democratic city, this early in a mayoral election year, most local residents would ordinarily feel that they were fulfilling their political-homework assignments by sorting out their preferences among possible Democratic nominees. They are now being reminded in daily headlines and several times a day on the tube that in 1989—with a new Republican in the White House—they'll have to sort out Republican candidates as well.

The Manhattan Republicans' annual Lincoln Day dinner last month was presided over as usual by the Manhattan Republican chairman, State Senator Roy Goodman. The main speaker was Lee Atwater, the manager of George Bush's campaign, who brought the locals the welcome news that the problems of inner cities, and, specifically, those of this city, were now on the Republican national agenda. So, he said, was this year's New York mayoral election. "It's time for the Republican Party to take campaigns right to the inner cities," Atwater told the Manhattan crowd. "There's no better place to start than New York City. An invasion by the Republican Party of the inner cities," he said, and a G.O.P. victory in the mayoral race here would "turn this country spinning."

In previous state or city election years, local Republicans often spent the early months of campaigns beating the bushes and twisting arms in search of candidates willing to run against Democrats, who were then sure to wipe them out on Election Day. (Andrew O'Rourke, the Westchester County Executive, who finally agreed to oppose Governor Mario Cuomo in 1986—Cuomo beat him two to one—forbade anyone to mention the terms "kamikaze" or "sacrificial lamb" in his presence.) On this year's Lincoln Day dais with Atwater sat one already announced mayoral candidate—Ronald Lauder, formerly Ronald Reagan's Ambassador to Austria, and the son of Estée Lauder, of the cosmetics empire, a man who is prepared to spend on the mayoral race a good chunk of his fortune, which *Forbes* has put at three hundred and thirty-three million dollars. Lauder is almost totally unknown in the city, but, a month after he announced his candidacy, on January 31st, he had spent close to a million dollars on commercials that attempted to remedy this disability.

Atwater's evident belief that 1989 might be a Republican mayoral year in New York was presumed to rest instead on another man on the dais that night—Rudolph Giuliani, who has no public-recognition problem. On January 10th, Giuliani resigned after five and a half years as the United States Attorney for New York's Southern District, during which his highly publicized record as a prosecutor of Mafia leaders, crooked Wall Street traders, and such symbols of corruption as Mayor Edward Koch's good friend

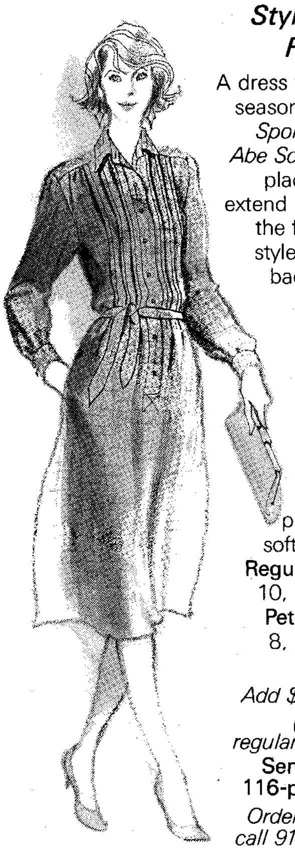
*"O.K., you take one little blue one for malheurs, and two little yellow ones for angst."*

Stanley Friedman and the defendants in the Wedtech case had caused old-timers to invoke the memory of Thomas E. Dewey, a much-headlined Republican prosecutor from this city who went a good way in politics. In case anyone doubted that Giuliani had this precedent—and a political career—in mind, on the day he moved out of the U.S. Attorney's quarters reporters found in his office an old newspaper open to a page that featured the headline "GIULIANI AND DEWEY—CAREERS COMPARED." A few weeks after his resignation, Giuliani signed on with White & Case, a local law firm, whose partners expressed their gratification at having the opportunity to boost his income to as much as six hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars a year. By that time, several prominent figures who had served in the Bush campaign were said to be lining up to join his campaign and fund-raising staff once he had finally announced his candidacy for mayor. They included Richard Bond, who was not often publicly associated with the Willie Horton commercials, unlike Bush's media adviser, Roger Ailes, who prepared it, and who is now working for Ronald Lauder. Thus it could be that New York Republicans who took note of the Bush campaign's winning good-cop–bad-cop approach last year will have a chance, in a Republican primary this September, to come down on one side or the other of the question.

Koch's popularity has fallen dramatically in recent months, and a *Daily News*/Eyewitness News poll published on February 1st had Giuliani beating him by fifty-nine per cent to twenty-eight. Two days after Giuliani resigned as U.S. Attorney, a *Post* cartoon showed, in one corner, a panic-stricken Koch dreaming that Giuliani was sitting at his City Hall desk as a mounted trophy of Koch's head glowered down from the wall behind him. "I didn't think a Republican mayor of New York was possible again in my lifetime," Representative Guy Molinari, of Staten Island, said at his borough's Lincoln Day dinner. "Here is the man who will lead us into City Hall and turn this city around"—a sanguinity that ignored the fact that Giuliani had never been elected to, or even run for, any elective office.

Prospective voters here who feel more comfortable if the discourse among potential candidates falls short of attempts at political disfigurement have been distressed mainly by the pre-campaign maneuverings among local Democrats, particularly the invective indulged in by the present mayor. Koch accused one of his probable opponents, City Comptroller Harrison Goldin, of engaging in tactics that resembled those of Hitler's propaganda chief, Joseph Goebbels. On other occasions he said of Goldin, "The devil's in his head," and asked, "Would you buy a used car from this man?" Later Koch amended the latter comment to say of Goldin, the official charged with auditing all aspects of the city's twenty-five-billion-dollar annual budget, "I wouldn't even buy a *new* car from him." At the Manhattan Lincoln Day dinner, Lee Atwater disposed of the notion that—in his view, at least—the Willie Horton commercials had been an aberration. After mentioning the New York mayoral race, he said, "I'm not going to be kinder or gentler. . . . We've got a whole White House full of statesmen now. . . . I'll do what I've always done—try to beat Democrats." A week later, the Republican leader Ed Rollins, discussing how he planned to defeat prominent Democrats in the next congressional elections, said, "I won't steal, murder, lie, cheat, or pillage, but aside from that, anything goes."

UNLIKE Richard Nixon in 1972 and Ronald Reagan in both his Presidential races, Bush did not carry New York State last November. Michael Dukakis's winning campaign here was directed by Governor Mario Cuomo. The Governor may have taken special pleasure in keeping New York out of the Republican column, recalling how enthusiastically Bush campaigned here against him once. "We're going to beat the pants off of Mario—and I mean *literally*," he told a Manhattan rally. The Dukakis victory here was achieved with considerable help from the Republicans. They apparently decided to write the state off despite vigorous complaints from Alfonse D'Amato, New York's Republican senator, for whom 1988 was not a good year: he had backed Kansas Senator Robert Dole rather than Bush for the nomination. Bush campaigned in the state only a single day, and his one being in Queens, which he had by then learned not to refer to as "the Queens," as he did in 1984. (To an out-of-



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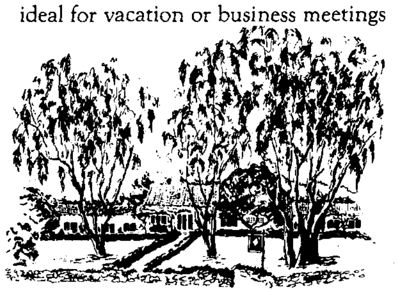

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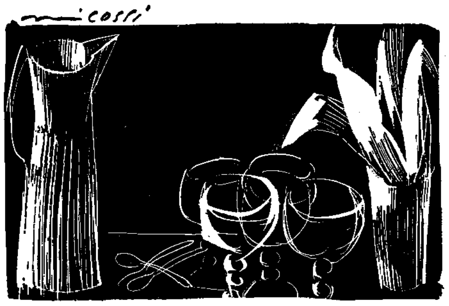
towner, the earlier form must have seemed perfectly logical. After all, if it's “the Bronx,” why not “the Queens”?) Queens is the home borough not only of Cuomo but of the 1984 Vice-Presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro, of whom Bush once, urgently, boasted that he had “tried to kick a little ass.” (For that matter, it was Ms. Ferraro whom Barbara Bush unkindly described as “that—I can't say it—it rhymes with ‘rich.’ ”) That Bush didn't carry Queens, among other New York areas, last year was surely a matter of small concern, over all. In an example of how national politics can be local, in recent months the sense of stirring about and change in Washington as one Presidential Administration was replaced by another after eight years were bound to be a reminder—one not at all welcome at New York's City Hall—that Koch has been in office going on twelve years and is now trying for sixteen. The *News* poll that showed Giuliani beating Koch by an overwhelming margin was taken the week after the Inauguration, and also showed Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins—who, if elected, would be the city's first black mayor—defeating Koch by eight points. However, according to the poll, in a three-way race Giuliani would come out ahead of both Dinkins and Koch by nineteen and eighteen points respectively. The Mayor's comment on these results was a fair enough reminder that last July a poll showed Dukakis seventeen points up on Bush.

AS everyone can testify, since last November it has been a rare political gathering at which somebody didn't mention that the Democrats have lost four of the last five Presidential elections. At the same assemblies, anyone could prove the relative weirdness of New York (if proof were needed) by pointing out that in New York State elections—although the Democratic advantage in registration is less than three to two, which is not so different from the national ratio—Republicans haven't elected a governor since 1970, which was the last year Nelson Rockefeller was treating the state Republican Party (and its treasury) as his wholly owned subsidiary. In the city, where the Democrats have a more than five-to-one advantage in registration, only three Republican mayors have been elected in this century. Seth Low was elected to a two-year term in 1901. Fiorello LaGuardia served for three terms, beginning in 1934. Nineteen sixty-five was the last year a mayor won on the Republican line; the winner, John Lindsay, later became a Democrat. In 1977, the first year Koch ran for mayor, the Republican candidate—it was Roy Goodman—got four and three-tenths per cent of the vote. The G.O.P. was so desperate for a candidate in 1981 that it allowed Koch to run on its line as well as his own Democratic line. In 1985, the Republican nominee, Diane McGrath, whose only claim to mayoral credentials was that she was a member of the State Crime Victims Board, ended up with a percentage of the vote only a few points higher than Goodman's. However, in support of the outlanders' theory that nearly everything that happens in this city resembles either a grisly documentary or a sitcom, the Republican effort four years ago had happy consequences. During the campaign, Mrs. McGrath, a comely blonde, met William McKechnie, the head of the Transit Policemen's union, which turned out to be the only major union to support her. Last year, she and McKechnie, also a comely sort—with, in his case, prematurely white hair—were married. Even before Giuliani and Lauder loomed on the scene, no thought was given to renominating Mrs. McGrath—that is, Mrs. McKechnie—this year. Also not considered was a rerun for State Senator Goodman. William Safire did suggest that it would be nice to have Goodman around for another purpose: so that on Election Day the winner could turn to Goodman and ask, “Roy, am I mayor?”—thereby contributing to Safire's palindrome collection.

IF the Bush Administration were to move in a serious way and help mount a mayoral campaign this year, which Atwater suggested was a real possibility, it would be a huge boost for local Republicans, whom the Bush regime has so far provided with little aid and comfort. Staten Island Representative Molinari had believed that, on the strength of his exertions for the Bush cause in this state (unavailing though they were), he had a good chance of being named to the job he coveted, which was Secretary of Transportation. The President explained to him that this was impossible, because the Party could not spare a single incumbent member of the House. Goodman, who had wanted to be head of the General Services Administration, also lost out: his appointment might mean the loss of a Republican seat in the State Senate, so it was back to Albany for him. Goodman had been thought to have a particularly strong claim to Washington's attention, because he had been one of two hundred and fifty contributors of at least a hundred thousand dollars to the G.O.P.—not his own money, it turned out, but that of the Manhattan Republican clubhouse. Giuliani, who has something of a Malvolian streak in him, takes the position that it is only appropriate if political contributions get their donors nowhere. Last month, he explained that those who gave money to his campaign—he used the word “campaign” although he had not conceded that he was running for anything—should do so only because they wanted a new, reform, nonpartisan government at City Hall; the accomplishment of that goal would be their reward. However, he did not go as far as Fiorello LaGuardia did on the night of his first election as mayor. In his headquarters, surrounded by his supporters and, in many cases, contributors, LaGuardia leaped on a table and shouted, “My first qualification for mayor of the City of New York is my monumental ingratitude to each and all of you.”



In this city, as elsewhere, “Democrats” and “disarray” so often turn up together in political headlines that they may give the impression of being a single word. Republican politicians here have, for the most part, engaged in more orderly performances, managing to synchronize their responses to what they see as the latest outrages of the Democrats. Representative Molinari and Senator D'Amato are now openly hostile forces—Molinari being an energetic Giuliani supporter and D'Amato having gone all out for Lauder—but a few years back they shared a weekday apartment in Washington. And it was D'Amato who nominated Giuliani for U.S. Attorney. In the summer of 1986, in fact, the Senator and Giuliani were so cozy that they teamed up to stage a cautionary stunt in Washington Heights. Dressed in shabby jackets, picturesque caps, and dark glasses that they believed would establish them as drug customers, and, anyhow, would be great for photo-opportunity purposes, they each bought two vials of crack within a few seconds. Accompanying them on this excursion were, besides eight or ten photographers, thirty armed federal agents and undercover cops. The intent was to demonstrate that it was not hard to buy crack in Washington Heights—something that was not news to anyone living in Washington Heights or anywhere else in the city.

Since early last year, D'Amato has rarely had a polite word for his partner in crime-busting. Giuliani had contemplated accommodating local G.O.P. leaders who were urging him to leave the U.S. Attorney's office and run for the United States Senate against Daniel Patrick Moynihan, with whom D'Amato has from time to time been on poor terms. However, Giuliani didn't approve of the candidate D'Amato planned to nominate to replace him—Giuliani wanted one of his own people to have the job—so he stayed put. This not only infuriated D'Amato but left the Republicans without a strong candidate to oppose Moynihan. Eventually, the hapless sacrificial lamb who was persuaded to make the race—a Long Island lawyer named Robert McMillan—lost to Moynihan by the largest margin ever racked up in a contested election in the history of the Senate. In view of that disaster, as soon as Giuliani began to show some interest in a mayoral campaign D'Amato was a strong bet to support somebody else. For once, there has been little talk in connection with a political contest about people choosing up sides along ethnic lines—that is, so far as the Republicans are concerned. While Molinari supports Giuliani, D'Amato and State Senator Guy Velella of the Bronx are for Lauder. (In a speech at Lauder's announcement ceremony, Velella did speak well of Giuliani's criminal-justice record: he said that next November he would urge Mayor Lauder to appoint Giuliani police commissioner.)

Alfred Pantaleone, the Brooklyn Republican boss, wouldn't even allow Giuliani to come to the Brooklyn Lincoln Day dinner. Meanwhile, D'Amato has been working hard to get the state Republican chairman, Anthony Colavita, to resign. In times past, the image conjured up by the word "Republicans" was often that of white Protestants, like Lindsay—or, for that matter, Bush. New Yorkers who hadn't caught on to the fact that times have changed had to have been startled to discover that in 1986 the four Republican candidates for statewide office were named Andrew O'Rourke, Michael Kavanagh, Edward Regan, and Peter King—King having been the grand marshal of the previous year's St. Patrick's Day parade. Of these, only State Comptroller Regan, a two-term incumbent, was elected. This outcome didn't necessarily have anything to do with the fact that just now so many Republican politicians around here have names that end with a vowel. With Mario Cuomo, the first man of his ethnic heritage to be elected governor of this state, firmly ensconced in Albany, matters have come a long way for New York's Italian-Americans since the day of a City Hall Board of Estimate meeting back when LaGuardia, then president of the Board of Aldermen, was loudly sounding off, as was his custom. The City Comptroller, Charles L. Craig, turned to Mayor John J. Hylan, who was presiding, and said, "Will you please hit that little Wop over the head with the gavel?"

SOME G.O.P. leaders here maintain that they are not distressed at the prospect of Republicans steadily having at each other during the long months leading up to the September primary. In past elections, their nominees, designated by Party fiat, often spent the spring and summer on the sidelines, deploring the unseemly—and newsworthy—spectacle of Democratic contenders cutting each other up. On Primary Day, when the Democratic nominees finally emerged, their faces, however bloodied, were highly familiar to the voters—an advantage that their Republican rivals then had only a few weeks to try to match before the November election. State Republican Chairman Colavita said last month

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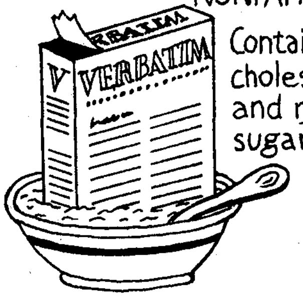

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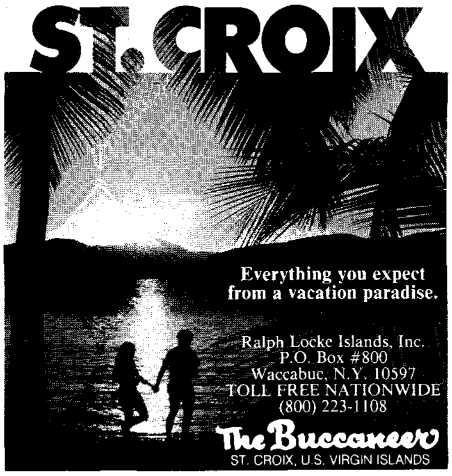

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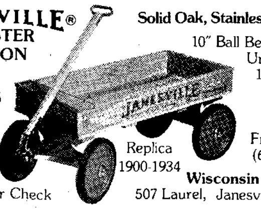

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that a mayoral primary this year between "two major personalities" would be "the best thing that could happen to the Party." D'Amato is also pushing a primary as a plus for the Republicans. He noted that his own current political eminence was "the product of a primary." In 1980, when the then obscure supervisor of Hempstead Township, on Long Island, entered the senatorial primary against the highly respected incumbent, Jacob J. Javits, he was on the short end of a sixty-seven-to-four rating in the polls. His defeat of Javits in the primary—which was followed by a victory in the general election—was credited to campaign commercials that relentlessly portrayed Javits as far too old and ailing to run again and showed a picture of him that, Javits said, had been "phonied up . . . to make me look like I'm dying." ("Actually, in life he looks worse than the picture," D'Amato told reporters.) Javits described D'Amato as "just a young fellow pushing, clawing . . . ready to do anything—and I mean anything—in order to gain public office." Javits' judgment was reinforced when D'Amato was quoted as telling a Conservative Party leader, "I'll do anything short of killing Javits in order to win this nomination." The commercials were prepared by the public-relations firm of Arthur Finkelstein, who is now working for Ronald Lauder, as is Ailes, who joined D'Amato somewhat later. The Senator has said several times that he is happy to back Lauder this year, because Lauder put up much of the money for his winning 1980 campaign.

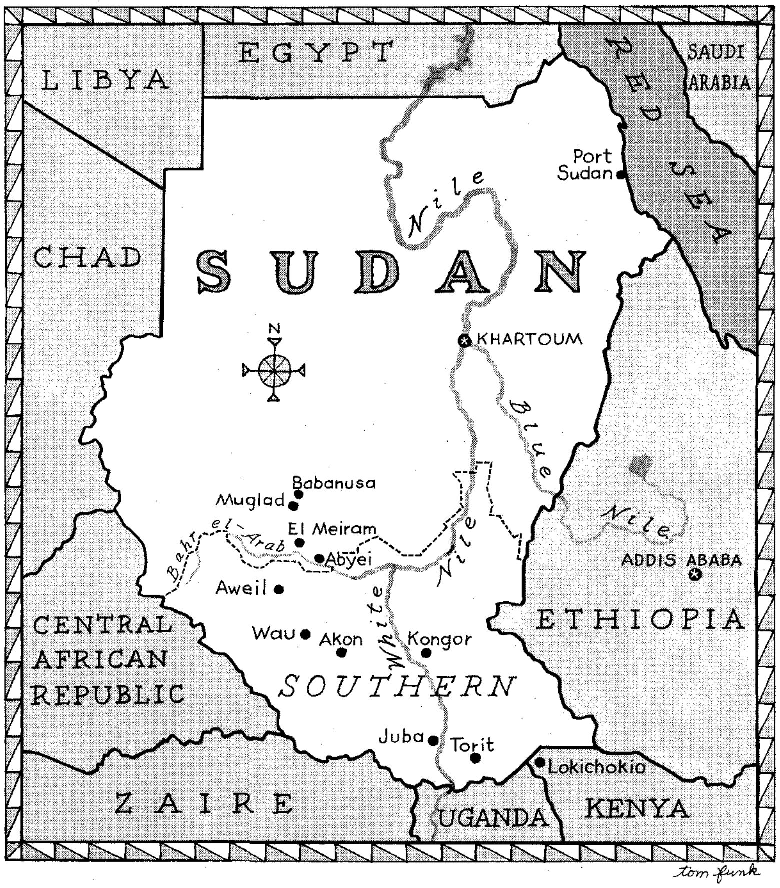
When it began to look as if Giuliani might in fact be going to enter the mayoral race, local pol-watchers began speculating on the kind of negative commercials Ailes and Finkelstein would use against him. Jeering at Giuliani's age would hardly do: at forty-four, the former United States Attorney is a few months younger than Lauder—and, for that matter, twenty years younger than Koch. For the first month of the Lauder campaign, most of his commercials dwelt on the deterioration of the city in the Koch years. D'Amato has said that he would not himself criticize the Mayor directly, theirs being a well-established mutual-admiration society. In the 1980 general election, Koch did everything possible to diminish the chances of D'Amato's Democratic opponent, Elizabeth Holtzman, making no protest when D'Amato referred to her as "an absolute witch"—another word that rhymes with rich. In 1986, when D'Amato ran for reëlection, Koch rejected the nominee of his own party, Mark Green, and endorsed D'Amato. According to some theories, the Senator's maneuvers in muddying up the Republican mayoral effort this year are being done to ease the way for the reëlection of his good friend Ed Koch. Before Lauder's negative commercials against Giuliani began, the Lauder campaign provided a taste of what might lie ahead (assuming that Giuliani will run). A two-page letter, signed by a Brooklyn state committeeman, was sent to all three hundred thousand of the city's registered Republicans. The letter charged Giuliani with being that favorite Republican pejorative a liberal, with having admitted that he had "proudly worked for lots of Democratic left-wingers, including George McGovern," and with having "admitted that he plans to raise taxes." Giuliani is, indeed, a Democrat, which, in view of Ronald Reagan's political history, is not necessarily a crippling circumstance to Republicans. He has said that he never worked for McGovern, and has never mentioned raising taxes. D'Amato's comment was that the letter's content seemed about right. Giuliani's supporter Molinari said that the letter had "such a stench attached to it that Ronald Lauder could not deodorize it using the best of his mother's perfumes."

In Washington a couple of weeks ago, at his regular meeting with reporters, Senator Moynihan mentioned in the same breath two sources of happy astonishment: the lessening of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union and the possibility that there would be a real contest between the Republicans and the Democrats in New York's mayoral race. A two-party system was badly needed here, he said, and, in his view, the absence of it had helped bring about the city's current "malaise." Of course, the international development was of far greater historic importance than the latest political news from this city. Still, who would have thought it, he said of what might be happening here. "It ranks right up there with the improbabilities."

—ANDY LOGAN

# A REPORTER AT LARGE

## FAMINE



A BOY crawled from a mud-and-wattle hut roofed by a cone of dried grass and tried to stand, but his thin legs wouldn't support him, and he fell. He was struggling against severe malnutrition. His head was disproportionately large for his body, and his curly hair had receded as if he were an old man. He was probably four or five years old. When his mother picked him up, his spindly legs, under her bare breasts, wrapped like vines around the sagging skin on her stomach. Amid a cluster of huts nearby, a girl stood naked and silent, staring blankly. Her skin stretched taut over her rib cage, her pelvis, and her hipbones. Her knees stuck out like knots on a sapling.

It was October of 1988, and throughout Abyei, a village in the Sudan that is surrounded to the horizon by nothing but thorn trees, tall grass, and swamp, thousands of children were suffering from severe malnutrition. In July and August, an outbreak of measles had hit Abyei. Fifty or sixty children died each day—at least two thousand altogether. Hyenas dragged some bodies away before they could be buried. There is a military garrison in Abyei, and it has a radio, but if the soldiers notified anyone in Khartoum, the capital, about what was happening the government didn't respond. The soldiers had medicine, but they wouldn't share it with the dying children. A Catholic mission did its best. "The only thing we could give them was Vitamin A," a priest said. Every day, he said, women carrying frail children would form a long line at the parish church, hoping that the fathers might have something for them. "After two or three days, they wouldn't come back. The children would just die."

The military commander in Abyei said in October that more than ten thousand people had died of starvation since the beginning of the year, half of them children. He spoke without emotion. A round face and a slight paunch suggested that he himself had not gone without food; and neither, it appeared, had any of his soldiers or the town's civilian administrators, all Arabs. Most of the victims were Dinka, members of the largest tribe in the southern Sudan. The Dinka, an extraordinarily tall, thin people, are pastoralists who revere their cattle.

El Meiram is a village to the west of Abyei—a walk of seven or eight days, in Dinka terms. In September, representatives of two humanitarian organizations—Oxfam-U.K. and Save the Children-U.K.—went to El Meiram, where there is a refugee camp, walking the final five hours, after the road ended. Along the way, the relief workers saw many groups of Arab tribesmen with Kalashnikov rifles. "One group were escorting ten extremely malnourished Dinka children," they wrote in a memorandum that was circulated to a number of humanitarian organizations, to the representatives of Western governments in Khartoum, and to the Prime Minister of the Sudan, Sadiq al-Mahdi. "We were told they had paid money to the parents for their labour. Other informants told us that often parents are shot and the children taken forcibly to work as slaves." When the relief workers stopped at a water hole to fill their canteens, they were warned by their Arab guide that "the pool was full of dead Dinka bodies."

The relief workers found six thousand Dinka in the refugee camp at El Meiram, all malnourished. "Several dead bodies were seen lying around the camp and a visit to the graveyard confirmed that 19 had already been buried that morning in a communal grave: 5 more bodies awaited burial," the workers wrote. "Scavenging by hyenas during the previous night created a gruesome sight and vultures waited at the edge of the area." The local authorities prohibited the registration of deaths, "but it has been secretly recorded that at least 3,000 have been buried within the last three months."

The famine in the Sudan is not like other famines that have troubled Africa. Though the Sudan has been plagued by natural disasters, especially during the last three years, when drought has prevailed, nature is not the principal culprit. Man is. The principal cause of the famine has been a war—a war that has been largely ignored by the West. The war, which is a crushing financial burden for an already bankrupt country, has meant the virtual destruction of a nation and the near-extermination of a culture. It is a civil war—essentially of three regions in the south (Bahr el-Ghazal, Upper Nile, and Equatoria) against the north. In the Western world, the war is portrayed as a religious one—Africans in the south, who are pagan or Christian, against Arab Muslims in the north. But Muhammad O. Beshir, a prominent Sudanese historian and the author of "The Southern Sudan: Background to Conflict," says emphatically, "It is not a Muslim-Christian war." The myth that it is a religious war is perpetuated by both sides: by members of the Sudanese Muslim élite because they hope to gain the backing of Arab states, and by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army—the southern rebel army, which is headed by a Dinka named John Garang—because it wants to tap into anti-Arab and anti-Islamic bias among individuals, groups, and governments in the West.

The underlying causes of the conflict, which has gone on in various forms for more than thirty years, are relatively straightforward ones: discrimination and a demand for equality. Economic power and political power are concentrated in the Arab north, and the black south has been left out. During the nearly sixty years of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, the British, who were effectively the rulers, did little to develop the south. At the time of the Sudan's independence, in 1956—it was the first black African country to gain independence—the south had few doctors, few hospitals, and only a handful of government schools. Progress has been barely perceptible since. The Sudan's population is estimated to be twenty-four million, and a quarter of the people live in the southern regions, yet by 1980 there were only fourteen secondary schools in the south; in the north, there were a hundred and fifty-five. The southern regions are as large as Texas but have only a few miles of paved roads and not many dirt ones. The south is mostly savanna—tall grass, acacia bushes, and thorn trees. In the eastern stretches of the area is one of the world's largest swamps—the sudd. (The word means barrier in Arabic.) The north is largely desert, and the desert is creeping south a few feet each year.

While Beshir is right in saying that the war is not a Muslim-Christian war, religious zealotry and racial bigotry do inflame it. In the nineteen-thirties, it was the Christian missionaries in the south who perpetuated discrimination. They wanted to keep the Arab Muslims out of the south and convert the southern tribes to Christianity. These days, the Arabs in the north feel superior to the Africans in the south, and discriminate against them. As the head of the government, in Khartoum, Prime Minister Sadiq has exacerbated the historic animosities and mistrust, by seeking to impose Islamic law. But even if the government were to abandon its insistence on Islamic law the war would go on.

It is a war in which neither side gives any quarter. The Sudanese People's Liberation Army, however just its cause may be, employs tactics that are condemnable by any civilized standard. The S.P.L.A. forces steal cattle, burn villages, and rape women. The government is no better—neither the regular Army nor the militia. To fight the S.P.L.A., which consists principally of Dinka, the government has armed Arab tribes with automatic weapons, and these have added a deadly dimension to tribal clashes over grazing lands. For centuries, such battles ended with tribal rulers sitting down together, deciding how many head of cattle were to be paid as war compensation, and exchanging prisoners. Now, with modern weapons, more blood flows, and more tribal warriors are killed. Moreover, instead of attacking solely the S.P.L.A. the Arab militia has turned against civilians, killing the men and kidnapping the women and children.

Southerners who try to flee the war, seeking refuge in places like Abyei and El Meiram, which are on the edge of the war zone, have to run the gantlet of Arab and other tribal militiamen. At a refugee camp in the village of Muglad, a Dinka woman named Achol told me that her five children had been seized by Arab militiamen. She had a tattered piece of cloth wrapped around her thin body, and wore four or five tarnished bracelets, made from old cooking pots, on both wrists and her right ankle, and seven tiny copper rings in her right ear. A crowd gathered around us—men and women, many with their faces scarred. The scarring, a tribal beautification ritual, may take the form of straight lines across the forehead or of raised dots in symmetrical circles covering the entire face. Achol said that about three hundred people had fled her village, Rumrandit, after it was raided by both the Arab militia and the S.P.L.A. Along the way, they encountered more Arab militia. "They rushed at us," she said—she was speaking through an interpreter, a Dinka who had recently graduated from college and had abandoned the possibility of a job in Khartoum to work with his people in this refugee camp. "They frightened us with guns." She said she had been raped. "They took the children from us. They beat us."

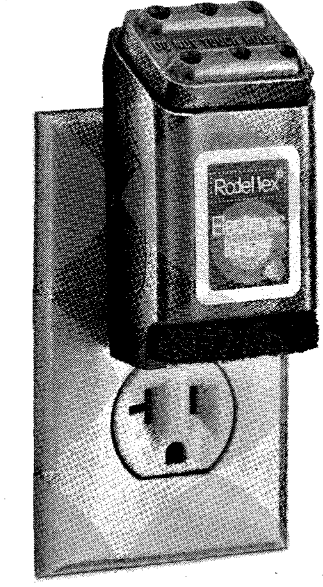
Both sides in the war have deployed a silent weapon to kill women and children: starvation. It is as much a part of their warfare as automatic rifles and land mines. The government hasn't allowed food to go to towns and villages to which refugees from the south have fled, and the S.P.L.A. has blown up convoys and threatened to shoot down planes carrying relief food to towns—even towns populated by Dinka—that it has under siege. No one knows how many people have starved to death in the Sudan in recent months. It might be a hundred thousand or half a million or more. Such numbers dull the mind. The point is that many people could have been saved if the international community had acted quickly and decisively.

If one asks why the international community did not respond when so many people were starving, diplomats, United Nations officials, and workers in private humanitarian organizations have ready answers. Among them, they say, in effect, that the country is so poor and so underdeveloped that even under "normal" circumstances—that is, with no war and no drought—it is difficult to accomplish much in the Sudan.

It is certainly true that the Sudan is underdeveloped. Four of every five Sudanese are illiterate, and among the tribes in the south illiteracy is nearly universal. Infrastructure is virtually nonexistent. Of all telephone calls attempted from Khartoum to Port Sudan, the country's second-largest city and a Red Sea port, only three per cent are completed. The Sudan is the largest country in Africa, almost as large as the United States east of the Mississippi, yet it has only about three thousand miles of roads, twenty-five hundred of which are gravel or dirt. Until recently, there was no paved road directly from Khartoum to Port Sudan. Compounding the underdevelopment, floods, the drought, and plagues of locusts and rats have battered the country in the past three years. And yet, while underdevelopment and these disasters in part explain the inadequate response to the famine, the government's lack of will has been as much, if not more, to blame.

Many observers believe, and cite evidence, that it has been part of the government's military strategy for the southerners to die from starvation—or, at least, to flee the south in search of food. The word "genocide" is uttered a lot by both foreigners and Sudanese when they talk about what is happening in the Sudan, but a Western official in Khartoum was probably right when he said, in October, "I am convinced that there was never a Cabinet meeting at which a decision was reached by consensus that 'we are going to commit genocide.' " He went on, "But that's not to say that there aren't whole groups of people who would like to get rid of all the blacks in Khartoum and all the Dinka in the south." Those groups have power—they include the military, and government officials at regional and national levels. And though the government may not have instituted a policy of genocide, it was surely "complicit" in the deaths of southerners, as one American official put it.

The international community, too, has been negligent, complacent, unable or unwilling to act decisively in a manner that would have saved lives. "Everyone has a lot to answer for," the director of operations for one private humanitarian group working in the Sudan told me in October—including his own organization, he said, which should have spoken out sooner. The private humanitarian organizations knew that people in the Sudan were



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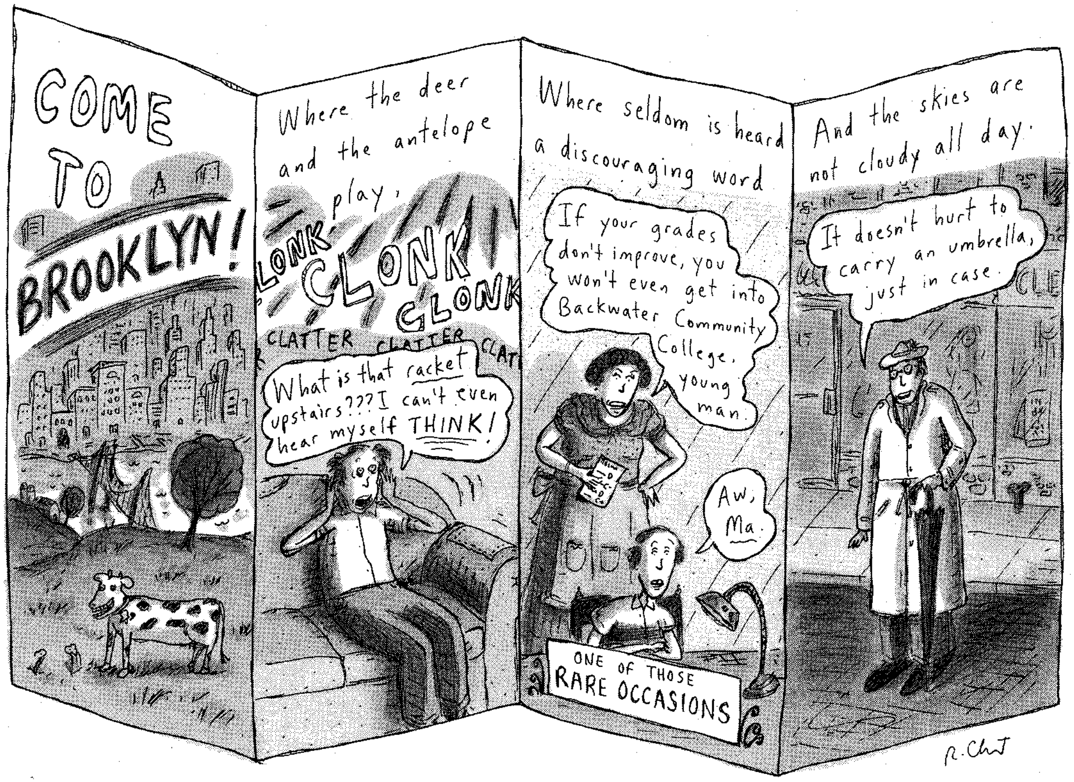
COME TO BROOKLYN!
Where the deer and the antelope play,
LONK CLONK CLONK
CLATTER CLATTER CLAT
What is that racket upstairs??? I can't even hear myself THINK!
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
If your grades don't improve, you won't even get into Backwater Community College, young man.
Aw, Ma.
ONE OF THOSE RARE OCCASIONS
And the skies are not cloudy all day.
It doesn't hurt to carry an umbrella, just in case.
R. Chast

• •

dying, but for a long time they were silent, fearing that if they did speak out they would be expelled. Powerful Western governments were also silent. The United States, Britain, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Japan, the European Economic Community, the United Nations agencies said nothing. When the United States finally spoke out, it condemned the S.P.L.A. but did not criticize the Sudanese government, which surely deserved as much censure, if not more. Nor did the international press pursue the story as it had the famine in Ethiopia in 1984 and 1985.

It was not for lack of preparedness or information or food that the world failed to respond to the Sudanese famine in time to save lives. The possibility of a war-induced famine in the southern Sudan has been a concern of Western governments and U.N. agencies since a drought and bad harvests in 1984 and 1985. In September of 1986, the U.N. announced Operation Rainbow. Supported with money and food from eleven international donors, including the United States, it was patterned after Operation St. Bernard, a successful airlift of food to Ethiopia during the famine there. But Operation Rainbow failed. The Sudanese government would not allow the U.N. to fly food and other supplies into areas controlled or under siege by the S.P.L.A. What's more, the S.P.L.A. announced that it would shoot down any plane attempting to fly into Juba, the largest town in the south, and the threat had to be taken seriously, because a month earlier S.P.L.A. forces had used a missile to shoot down a Sudan Airways plane with sixty people on board, all of whom were killed. A few months later, the Sudanese government expelled Winston Prattley, the director of the U.N.'s relief operations in Khartoum. Prattley had spent thirty-three years with the U.N., and was Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar's personal representative in the Sudan. U.N. officials say that the expulsion of someone of his stature was without precedent. "The international community took that lying down," a European diplomat recalled recently. "No one stood up for Prattley: not the United States, not the European Community—nobody." His expulsion and the acquiescence of the international community cowed the private relief organizations. "It was a big blow to everybody's confidence here," says Mark Duffield, the field director of Oxfam-U.K. in the Sudan. The message was clear: if the government could expel Winston Prattley, it could expel any humanitarian organization—and it would.

In the Sudan, Western officials continued to monitor the situation closely. The American Embassy in Khartoum kept Washington informed with a weekly "Southern Sudan Relief Status Report." The donor community—the U.N. agencies and the countries that were the major providers of development and emergency assistance to the Sudan—met regularly. The most influential were the United States (the Sudan's largest benefactor); the Netherlands (second in giving); the European Community (a close third); and Great Britain (for historical reasons). The problem was never a lack of food; by 1986, the United States alone had more than one million one hundred thousand tons of grain in the Sudan. The problem was how to get the food to the people who needed it. Repeated efforts to do so failed.

In 1987, for example, before the beginning of the rainy season, in June, when the roads would become impassable, seven thousand tons of grain were sent to Raga, in Bahr el-Ghazal, for eventual delivery to Wau, a town a hundred miles east. "It disappeared," an American official told me in October. In the summer of 1988, relief food still hadn't reached Wau; more than half the refugees there were severely malnourished; and the death toll was approaching three hundred a month.

Back in May of 1987, the donors had begun pressing the government to send trains with relief food from Babanusa, a flat, dusty town of mostly one-story mud structures, to Aweil, which is two hundred miles south. The government promised two trains a week, with a hundred cars per train. In late 1987, one train finally arrived in Aweil, with three cars of relief food. By summer, a hundred people were dying every day. In January of this year, a second train arrived.

In September of 1987, UNICEF and the U.N.'s World Food Program agency had sent a team to El Meiram. It was a "desperate situation," Cole

Dodge, who was then UNICEF's director in the Sudan, recalled. Five or six people a day were dying. An international relief organization wanted to set up an operation there to provide medical care and supplementary feeding for the malnourished. The government said no. And then, at the end of 1987, the government expelled four relief organizations that were working in towns in the southern Sudan where the war-inflicted famine was severe. One of the four was World Vision, an international Christian development-and-relief organization with headquarters in Los Angeles, which was working in Wau. At the time it received the letter of expulsion, World Vision had a contract with the United States Agency for International Development (AID) to distribute forty-five hundred tons of grain. The government ordered World Vision to "liquidate all your activities within three weeks' time and to hand over your vehicles and movable properties to the Commission for Relief and Rehabilitation." That commission is a Sudanese government agency, which diplomats and relief workers say is inefficient and corrupt. World Vision officials and American diplomats think that the expulsion had something to do with atrocities being perpetrated by the Army and government-armed militiamen against Dinka in Wau: the government either suspected World Vision of reporting the atrocities by radio to people in Khartoum or simply didn't want anyone in Wau who might be a witness to the atrocities.

On June 20, 1987, the mutilated bodies of eighteen Dinka were found near Wau, according to accounts by foreigners living there at the time. A month later, more dead Dinka were found, including a girl of six or seven who had been pierced by a spear. In August, after an S.P.L.A. attack on Wau, the Army went from house to house searching for Dinka, pulling them out and killing them. Hundreds of Dinka were hauled to the river by truck and machine-gunned. Sixty-two people were put in an empty ammunition storeroom and gassed. The next month, between a hundred and a hundred and fifty Dinka were killed by machine-gun fire, and their bodies thrown in the river.

Further evidence of the human catastrophe in the south and of the failure of all the relief efforts confronted the donors in November of 1987, when Sudanese refugees began crossing into Ethiopia in increasing numbers. By the end of the year, more than two hundred thousand people, most of them Dinka, were in camps at Fungido and Itang, just across the Ethiopian border. To escape, they had walked not for days but for one to four months, living on grass and seeds. One of five died.

Early in 1988, an international delegation that included Louis Janowski, the deputy chief of mission of the American Embassy in Addis Ababa, and Michael Priestley, the senior U.N. representative there, visited the refugee sites. They talked to a twelve-year-old boy who, with his five-year-old brother, had walked from Aweil, a distance of several hundred miles. Along the way, their father was killed, and their mother and sisters were taken away; the boys never saw them again. Other children had similar stories, and the delegation believed that there were some fifty cases of severe trauma among children between ten and twelve years old—"a grim testimonial of the ordeal of the march from Southern Sudan," the American Embassy in Addis Ababa reported in a cable to Washington. When the delegation visited the medical center in Fungido, "it was more than most people could deal with without severe emotional reaction," the cable noted. Several members of the delegation broke down and cried. Priestley described the situation as the worst he had seen in thirty-seven years with the United Nations.

BY January of 1988, the donors knew that "all our efforts to move food to people in need were not working," in the words of the head of a U.N. agency in Khartoum. At one of their meetings, someone suggested that the International Committee of the Red Cross be pressed into service, and the consensus was that this would be the best solution. In February, the I.C.R.C. began negotiating with both the government and the S.P.L.A., but it would be December before the committee started delivering any relief—and then it delivered only a fraction of what was needed. "The I.C.R.C. cannot be the scapegoat in this," Pierre Pont, the chief of the organization's delegation in Khartoum, told me in November, in a tone of voice that combined anguish and defensiveness. He was undoubtedly right.

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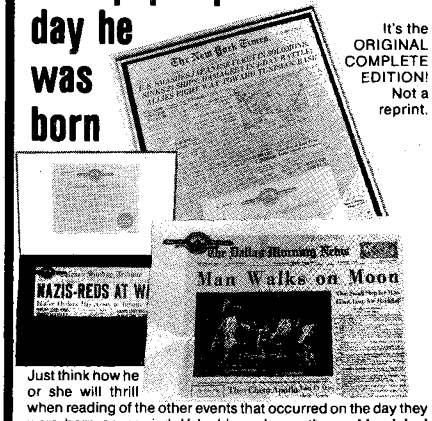

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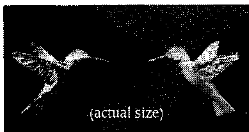

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turning to the I.C.R.C. The organization adheres to strict neutrality, and thus can work on both sides of a conflict. But the donors also had political reasons for relying on it. Doing so spared the Western governments from having to confront the Sudanese government directly—from insisting that the Sudanese government provide food and assistance to its own starving people. And relying on the I.C.R.C. excused the donors from undertaking their own airlifts (the United States did have an airlift, but it was a very limited one) or other relief operations. To do so, they said, would interfere with the I.C.R.C.

In early March, the I.C.R.C., after receiving permission from Prime Minister Sadiq, submitted a plan to survey the needs in six southern towns, three (Wau, Malakal, and Juba) held by the government, and three (Yirol, Kongor, and Pochala) controlled by the S.P.L.A. (Akon was subsequently substituted for Pochala.) The S.P.L.A. quickly accepted, but the I.C.R.C. had to wait two months for a response from the Sudanese government. Even then, the government imposed as its first condition that the I.C.R.C. operate "without the involvement of any other organization," according to a two-page agreement that was reached. It was an unusual condition, and the I.C.R.C. didn't like it. "You can't do anything alone," Dominique Buff, the deputy head of the I.C.R.C. delegation in Khartoum, said in October. "No one organization has the resources or the expertise to meet all emergency needs independently."

n. gustafson

After the I.C.R.C. finally received approval to conduct the surveys—the question of actually delivering food hadn't been discussed yet—it still had to obtain clearances and travel permits from the various government bureaucracies, including the military. To get permission to go to Wau took a month. Then the I.C.R.C. hit another barrier. The team assigned to carry out the survey in Yirol was to depart from the Kenyan city of Lokichokio, which is closer to Yirol than Khartoum is, and the Sudanese government had agreed to this. But when the plane was in the air Sudanese military authorities in Khartoum ordered it to turn back. Lieutenant Colonel Michael Kenney, the American defense attaché in Khartoum, called on Lieutenant General Muhammad Zein, chief of operations of the Sudanese armed forces, in an effort to get him to reverse the decision. Zein's reply was, in effect, "Why should we be sending assistance to these areas? All the innocent civilians have already fled to the north; anybody who is still there is the enemy, already an S.P.L.A. soldier or a potential one."

Faced with such opposition, the I.C.R.C. suspended its program, telling the donors that conditions in Wau were the worst it had ever encountered. Wau held thirty thousand refugees. Sixty per cent were severely malnourished. Ten or fifteen were dying every day. All were at risk of death if relief didn't reach them soon. The situation was much worse in Aweil, ninety miles to the north, the I.C.R.C. team in Wau was told. A hundred people were dying there daily. The government refused to allow the I.C.R.C. to go there, however, claiming that it was sending a train with relief food from Babanusa. In June, the European Community gave six hundred tons of durra, a Sudanese sorghum, for Aweil, but it was lost until late July, when it was found in the rail yard in Babanusa. But the grain continued to sit there. More than eight thousand refugees in Aweil died of starvation between June and September. The train didn't arrive until January of this year.

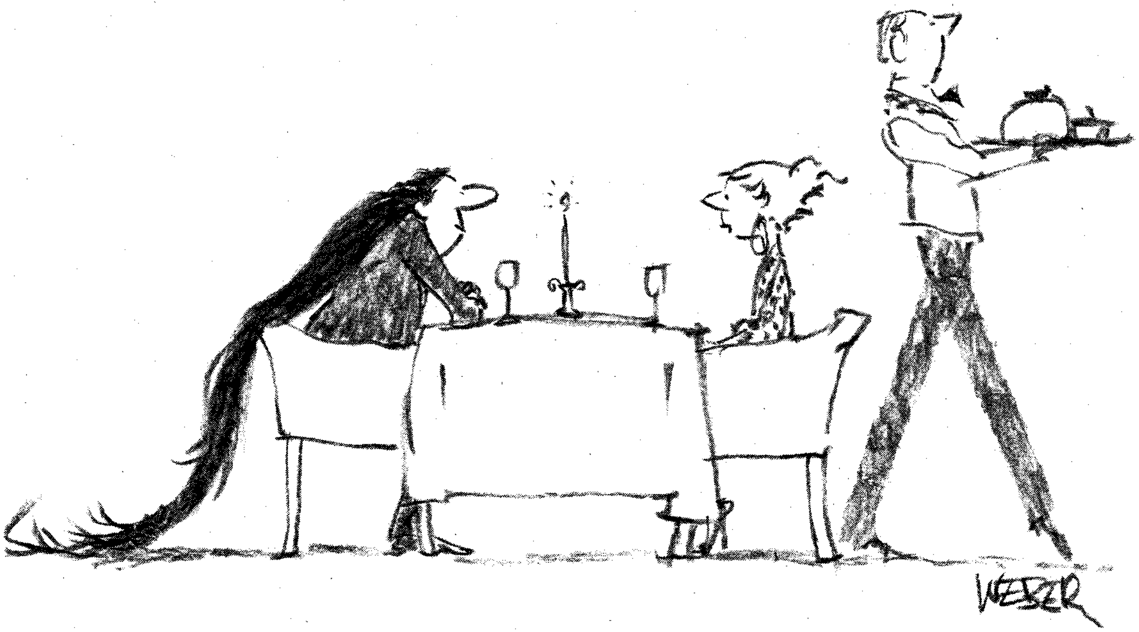
In Abyei, the situation had grown more desperate. A medical team arriving in the village in February of 1988 found that only six out of every hundred children between the ages of one and five were well nourished; seventy-four per cent were severely malnourished. In late May, a mission of donors and members of private organizations went to Abyei. "People were dying in the streets; there was no food, no medicine," the director of one organization told me. Immediately upon returning to Khartoum, the donor governments and the private organizations held a meeting to discuss what to do about Abyei. The relief workers stressed the need to get food to the village quickly, before the rainy season. Some of the diplomats didn't share the sense of urgency. They asked how many refugees there really were. Ten thousand? Fifteen thousand? Just when would the rains begin? And they harbored deep skepticism, born of many frustrations, that the government would allow any food to reach Abyei. A request was made to the Sudanese government to allow private organizations to begin working in Abyei. The government said no. It was in July that children started dying from measles.

Conditions in El Meiram were still worse. In June, about five thousand refugees were living there. They had no shelter, and lived under trees or in railway cars. They ate leaves. A Médecins Sans Frontières team of a doctor, two nurses, a sanitary engineer, and a logistics officer arrived in El Meiram on June 10th. M.S.F.-France had permission from the Sudanese government to conduct a nutritional program, particularly for malnourished children. The effectiveness of a nutritional program is dependent on general food distribution, but the government would not allow M.S.F. to distribute food. The distribution was carried out by the village council and the military; the food supply was "totally inadequate" and the distribution was "ill-organized," a report by Oxfam notes. M.S.F., according to its own report to the donors in July, "began an intensive feeding program, but without a basic ration it proved unsuccessful and all the children died."

M.S.F. urged the donors to send food. The donors said they were sending food; it never arrived. The United States provided thirty-three hundred sacks of grain, to be shipped by rail from Kosti, a city on the White Nile. Only nine hundred and sixty sacks were shipped, and they made it only as far as Babanusa. Even though the rainy season had begun and transportation by road had become virtually impossible, the trains could run. But the trains remained in the yard. The government always had reasons: the trains had no engines; there was no fuel or oil; the trains would be attacked by the S.P.L.A., because the tall grass along the tracks provided cover for would-be ambushers. Nevertheless, at one point a train went from Babanusa to pick up soldiers from a post on the Bahr el-Arab River. The river is beyond El Meiram, and the train went empty.

Eighty-eight children and forty-eight adults died in El Meiram during the third week in June. The next week, a hundred and twenty-three children and fifty-four adults died. The third week in July, a hundred and ninety-seven children and seventy-three adults died. The M.S.F. office in Khartoum wasn't aware of the scope of the tragedy soon enough to react to save lives, because the Sudanese government prohibited humanitarian organizations in the field from having communications radios, which are essential for relief workers in isolated areas. The military in El Meiram had a radio, but it didn't alert Khartoum, or, if it did, Khartoum didn't respond.

By the end of July, when the M.S.F. office in Khartoum became aware of what had been happening in El Meiram, the organization decided that it could no longer remain silent. "We decided that we had to shout," an M.S.F. official explained later. But when word spread that M.S.F. was considering talking to reporters the organization was besieged—by UNICEF, by the European Community, and by various private organizations. Please don't speak out publicly, they all urged. The private organizations faced a painful dilemma. They didn't want to be tossed out of the country—didn't want to meet the same fate as Winston Prattley, World Vision, and the others. Mark Duffield, of Oxfam, stated the predicament. Oxfam projects, he said, serve at least half a million people in the Sudan. "Do we throw away that for the sake of saving thousands in the south?"



*"Your ad in the 'Voice' didn't mention your hair."*

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UP to August, the Sudanese authorities bore responsibility for the delays in carrying out the I.C.R.C. plan, and also for other obstacles to the delivery of food. But from the West the silence persisted—no statements that might alert the world to the horror, and therefore no calls to the world to help the Sudanese victims of war and famine. And there was no public reproach of the Sudanese government. In fact, the United States effectively exonerated the government.

In July, the House Select Committee on Hunger held hearings to examine the famine situations in the southern Sudan and across the border in Ethiopia. The Administration's witnesses included Kenneth Brown, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, and Walter Bollinger, the deputy assis-

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tant administrator for Africa at AID. They did not shrink from censuring the Ethiopian government, which is headed by Mengistu Haile Mariam, a military strongman and a Marxist, but they strongly defended the Sudanese government. The Ethiopian government, Bollinger said, "is not as forthcoming and coöperative as it could be." By contrast, he testified, representatives of the Sudanese government "are always available to discuss relief efforts, but the pace of action in Sudan is seldom swift." The fact is that Ethiopia's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission was being given high marks by Western diplomats and U.N. officials that very July, while the counterpart commission in the Sudan was corrupt and inefficient, according to diplomats and relief workers there.

Bollinger outlined the reasons for what he characterized as the "slowness" of the Sudanese government: "the country's vast size; the lack of accurate data on conditions; the depressed state of the economy, which makes foreign exchange scarce for items such as diesel fuel; the very low level of development, particularly in logistics; the inexperienced and thinly staffed bureaucracy and the primitive and unreliable means of communication." Everything was to blame except the attitude of government officials toward the people in the south.

Both Bollinger and Brown noted that the Ethiopian government had expelled foreign relief workers. Neither mentioned in his opening statement that the Sudanese government had expelled World Vision and the other organizations, though both did acknowledge this under questioning by members of the committee. Similarly, they ignored the obstacles that the Sudanese government had placed in the path of the I.C.R.C. until they were questioned by committee members.

Representative Gary Ackerman, Democrat of New York, asked, "When the history of this whole thing is written, are we going to be regarded as accomplices in this horrendous policy of using food as a weapon and of starving people, maybe passive rather than active accomplices?"

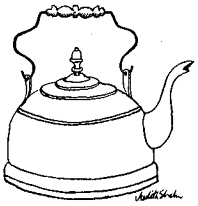
"I think we disagree as to whether or not there is a policy of starving people in the south, and what I have said earlier is that we do not believe that the Sudanese government has a policy of starving people in the south," Brown responded. "It does run into problems in delivery."

The Sudanese government was so fragmented, and Prime Minister Sadiq was such a weak and indecisive leader, that it had, in fact, few policies of any sort. Maybe the government wasn't systematically denying food to the south, but it was certainly preventing shipments of food from reaching the south. Washington was fully aware of that; just three weeks before Brown and Bollinger testified, the United States Embassy in Khartoum had cabled Washington regarding the "appalling conditions including starvation" in Wau. The Embassy noted that the I.C.R.C.'s operations there were at a standstill, and that this situation reflected "an appalling lack of concern on the part of the GOS [government of the Sudan] military authorities toward the suffering of the people."

Brown and Bollinger were confident that the I.C.R.C. would soon be providing relief. And on August 8th, the I.C.R.C. informed the donors that it intended to begin relief operations within ten days in Wau and Kongor, though only if it received the S.P.L.A.'s approval, and that it also intended to expand to Akon and Ler, on the S.P.L.A. side, and Torit and Aweil, on the government side.

THAT is where matters stood—no food reaching starving people—when nature again punished the Sudan, which had then been under attack by locusts for several months. On Thursday, August 4th, it had started raining in Khartoum, and it didn't stop for thirteen hours. Eight inches of rain came down—more than in all of 1987. The Blue Nile, which begins in Ethiopia, reached its highest level in more than forty years, inundating large sections of the city, where it joins the White Nile, whose source is in Uganda. Shantytowns were swept away. More than a million people were left homeless; there were warnings of outbreaks of cholera and other diseases.

"If it hadn't been for the floods . . ." I heard those words over and over again, from diplomats and relief workers. The rains, the floods, the death and destruction brought dozens of Western journalists to Khartoum. But, bad as the floods were, they were not as bad as had been feared. Fewer than a hundred people died, and there was no serious epidemic. The journalists soon began looking elsewhere for stories, and, aided by the private organizations and a few European diplomats, they found the famine in the south. It was because the press finally paid some attention to the story, diplomats and relief workers say, that the donors began putting more pressure on the Sudanese government, and the government's resistance to allowing food to reach the south began to weaken. "No one answers to anyone," the director of a humanitarian organization working in the Sudan said in October. "The U.N., the N.G.O.s"—non-governmental agencies—"the donors: the only people they answer to are the international press." That is an overstatement, but it does raise the question of why the international press hadn't uncovered the famine earlier, and why it paid relatively little attention even later, given the magnitude of the human suffering.



"We have been talking about this for several months now," a European diplomat in Khartoum told me in October. "Why wasn't it in the press?" (The "we" referred to the donors.) "It's worse than Ethiopia. And there the whole world came up in arms; only now are people reacting here."

I asked why the diplomats hadn't spoken out. Didn't they have an obligation to alert the world?

"No," he said. "It is not up to embassies to blow the whistle. But that doesn't stop the journalists from at least asking me questions."

Many journalists who are asked why the press paid so little attention to the Sudan respond with a phrase like "famine fatigue" or "compassion fatigue." It is not clear who has been suffering from this fatigue—reporters and editors or their audiences. Besides, the story wasn't an easy one for journalists to get. It took place in areas that were difficult to reach. And the Sudanese government repeatedly denied journalists' requests for permission to travel to the refugee camps.

One newspaper that was on to the story early was the Atlanta *Journal-Constitution*. In March and April, Deborah Scroggins, a twenty-seven-year-old reporter for the paper, ventured to Safaha, a hundred miles west of Abyei. "There are places so sad that the mind grows queasy trying to understand them," she wrote. She told about young women and elderly people who straggled into the refugee camp: "Over their heads they carry their naked children, whose skin hangs from their abdomens in grotesque folds of loose flesh." She wrote about "a shriveled little boy who was found lying in the dirt beside his mother. He was barely breathing, barely able to blink his enormous eyes against the flies swarming around them." Scroggins and another *Journal-Constitution* reporter, Colin Campbell, who had previously worked for the New York *Times*, pursued the Sudan story from their base in Atlanta. The two journalists were disappointed, and frustrated that their articles didn't have more impact. In the case of Ethiopia, it was only when the BBC and NBC showed pictures of emaciated children that the world's collective conscience was penetrated and the government bureaucracies responded.

In general, however, the world's television networks—American, European, Japanese—have paid even less attention to the Sudanese famine than print journalists have. Most of the American television coverage about the famine has been on the Cable News Network. CNN's Gary Strieker has lived in Africa for twenty years, arriving as a Peace Corps worker. His first report about the Sudan famine was broadcast in July of 1988, and there were further reports in September and October. But they didn't have the impact Strieker had hoped for; they didn't galvanize public opinion or other reporters. What was needed, Strieker knew, was pictures—pictures of malnourished children. But the Sudanese authorities blocked television crews from taking pictures in the refugee camps.

Further complicating the job of the press in the Sudan has been the attitude of the American Embassy in Khartoum. Diplomats aren't obligated to help journalists, and journalists should not rely on embassies for information, but sometimes there is a common interest—presumably, in the case of the Sudanese famine, a shared desire to save lives. Over the past several years, the American Embassy has sent regular, unclassified situation reports to Washington about the famine. If the Embassy had shared the information with journal-

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*"Basically, I want bilateral disarmament and she wants a divorce. And there it stands."*

• •

ists, the world might have known about the famine. Some American diplomats wanted to alert journalists to the famine, but there was a "gag rule," one diplomat explained. The Embassy's wariness at speaking to journalists is attributable in part to an extraordinary deference to the Sudanese government. In response to a reporter's question, one Embassy official replied, "How can I say that without offending the government?" Such deference is not the only problem, however. Some of the Embassy's detachment reflects the nature of the Ambassador, a fifty-six-year-old career diplomat named G. Norman Anderson. He is a shy, introverted man, according to fellow-diplomats, and while his colleagues from other countries have a high regard for him they invariably link praise with a comment on his taciturnity. A non-American participant in the donor meetings told me in October that Anderson had long been expressing concern about the situation in the south. "Indirectly, of course," this diplomat added. "He doesn't talk much in meetings anyway."

AT the end of August, the wall of silence around the Sudan tragedy began to crack—not because of Western diplomats and U.N. officials but because of small, private humanitarian organizations. For many relief workers, silence was no longer morally acceptable. The head of one group threatened to resign if his organization didn't speak out. That month, the Reverend Aengus Finnucane, the director of Concern, which is a relief-and-development organization with headquarters in Dublin, came to the Sudan, where Concern's doctors and nurses had just begun working. In Muglad, he saw a couple of thousand refugees living under trees, without any other shelter and without blankets. Ten to twenty people were dying every day, of chest infections and exposure. Finnucane had been reluctant to speak out, I was told by a Concern worker, but he was shocked by what he saw, and allowed himself to be interviewed by Mike Wooldridge, the BBC correspondent in East Africa.

The break with the silent past which had the greatest repercussions was made by M.S.F., the organization that had wanted to go public in July but had been persuaded by other organizations not to. M.S.F. proceeded with caution. An M.S.F. report—three pages and three appendixes—assessed no blame, and it omitted information that reflected badly on the government. It was still damning.

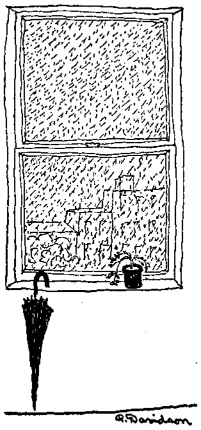
"The 'Bells of the Apocalypse' start to toll," the report said of El Meiram. "Thirty deaths each and every day were the figures for July!" An average of two hundred and eighty people a week died in July. "This is just over 1% of the total population dying of starvation each and every week," the report went on. "In the very considerable experience of Médecins Sans Frontières throughout the world, we have never ever experienced such high and alarming proportions." The report concluded:

> It is totally unacceptable, morally and professionally, to allow these people to die because of a basic lack of organization.
>
> Our work in El Meiram at the end of the chain is, for the time being, but an ugly charade. We are fully aware that it is now imperative to concentrate our efforts to insure that food is obtained and transported from wherever it might be found to El Meiram. We cannot afford to spare any effort, any time, any human resource, or any financial resources to get these destitute people fed.

Donors, U.N. officials, and officials in the private organizations agree that the M.S.F. report was a catalyst. "That's when we really started thrashing around in a frenzy," one Western official said. In early September, a group of senior Western diplomats finally went to Babanusa. This was no ordinary delegation. It was headed by the representative of the European Community, and included the Dutch chargé d'affaires, the Swiss chargé, two American AID officials, and the head of UNICEF. Using their collective influence, they "found" locomotives and commandeered four barrels of motor oil from Chevron, which has an oil-drilling headquarters in Muglad, and which had been quietly providing assistance to Concern in Muglad whenever it was requested. Finally, the train moved. Finally, food reached El Meiram. But not all of it went to the Dinka refugees. Twenty per cent was immediately seized by the local authorities. In addition, soldiers sent children into the camp to collect food for them.

Although shaken into action by the

M.S.F. report, the donors still resisted speaking out publicly, and they continued to gamble on the I.C.R.C. rather than pursue other initiatives. The I.C.R.C., too, was optimistic. In early August, it had brought to the Sudan a Hercules transport aircraft and thirty-five delegates who would work in the field, but they sat and waited. Waiting was expensive and, to the I.C.R.C., frustrating and demoralizing. Now, however, it was the Sudanese People's Liberation Army, more than the government, that was imposing obstacles. The S.P.L.A. was just as bureaucratic and intransigent as the government. To get permission to operate in S.P.L.A. areas, the I.C.R.C. had to deal with the S.P.L.A. office in Addis Ababa and with the office of the Sudanese Relief and Rehabilitation Agency, the relief arm of the S.P.L.A., which has its office in Nairobi. The I.C.R.C. would receive approval from one office and then the other would say no; when it persuaded the second to say yes, the first would reverse itself. During the early days of September, for example, Deng Alor, a top official at the S.P.L.A. office in Addis Ababa, told the I.C.R.C. that it could begin operating in Wau and Kongor, but he added that he had to get final approval from John Garang, the S.P.L.A. leader. For two weeks, the I.C.R.C. heard nothing. Finally, on September 19th, Deng Alor said the I.C.R.C. could not begin operations until its survey in Akon had been completed. Then the government and the S.P.L.A. skirmished over the departure point for the I.C.R.C. flight to Akon. The S.P.L.A. wanted the plane to depart from Lokichokio; the Sudanese government wanted it to leave from Khartoum. Initially, the Sudanese government had said yes to the plane's departing from Lokichokio, but a few days later it said no. So the plane flew from Kenya to Khartoum in order to fly back to Akon, but it had to wait in Khartoum until further approval came from the S.P.L.A. That approval was not given for two months.



On the initiative of the United States, the Western governments decided in early September that it was time to put pressure on the S.P.L.A. and Garang, painting them as the villains. On October 3rd, the State Department issued a brief statement about the famine in the Sudan. It was the first time the United States had commented on the tragedy except when officials were called before Congress. The Sudanese government was pleased. There was "jubilation" at the Sudanese Embassy in Washington, said an aide to Representative Mickey Leland, the chairman of the House Select Committee on Hunger. But the statement was incomplete and inaccurate; it gave a distorted picture of what was happening in the Sudan.

The statement said, in part, "Emergency efforts by the government of the Sudan assisted by the U.S. and other donor nations have recently succeeded in moving large quantities of relief food and other supplies into this area. This comes after months of logistical difficulties which previously had frustrated relief agencies." The statement went on to say that the efforts to deliver food "come at a time when the Sudanese People's Army appears to have reversed its position which had allowed relief efforts in the south. We deplore these outrageous actions which have targeted trucks and planes that are undertaking humanitarian missions." On September 8th, a convoy of some six hundred trucks with commercial and relief supplies going from Yei to Juba had been ambushed by an S.P.L.A. unit. A military escort leading the convoy was not attacked; only the relief vehicles were, and nine drivers were killed. The European Community debated whether to condemn the S.P.L.A. but decided not to, because, a European diplomat explained, it would be unfair to criticize only one side—and the European Community, like the United States, did not want to offend the Sudanese government.

A week after the State Department issued its statement, I talked with Bona Malwal, the editor of the Sudan *Times*, a four-page English-language daily published in Khartoum. The Sudanese press is free and vigorous, and blunt criticisms such as those which Bona Malwal aims at the government would land him in jail, or worse, in most other African countries. Bona Malwal, who is fifty-one years old, is a

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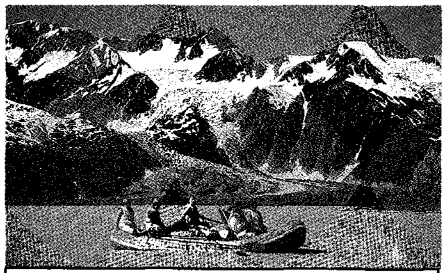

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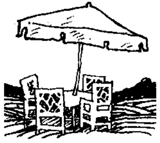

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Dinka from a small village near Abyei. Referring to the American criticism of the S.P.L.A., he said, "The S.P.L.A. has to bear some blame, but the attitude of the United States that the Sudan government is doing everything right is an attitude that is cynical, to say the least. The United States knows that Sadiq holds greater responsibility than the S.P.L.A., because his is the constituted government of the Sudan. Thousands are dying every day—and the United States knows it—in areas absolutely under the control of the Sudanese government, not under S.P.L.A. control." He listed as examples Abyei, Aweil, and Juba. "And what does the United States say about it? The United States hasn't been very critical of any government in power except when it is weak, small, and leaning toward Communism. Then the United States gets down on it—Ethiopia, Angola, Nicaragua."

The policy that the United States has pursued in the Sudan has been one of "quiet diplomacy." According to neutral observers and diplomats from other countries, the American Embassy did express concern about the famine to the Sudanese government. Ambassador Anderson, one diplomat said, had raised the issue directly with Sadiq so often that the Prime Minister "must have grown tired of hearing about it." But the power (or effectiveness) of quiet diplomacy is finite. "The United States and the European Community have been putting pressure on the government of Sudan in a silent way," a European diplomat said in October. "It's not that we didn't get anywhere but that we didn't get far enough."

WHILE caution seemed to be State Department policy, there was one agency in Washington that wanted to act decisively—the Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance. Created by Congress in 1964, as an arm of AID, OFDA has a mandate to provide emergency assistance when a country is hit by a disaster that it does not have the ability to handle. In 1988, OFDA was involved in relieving sixty tragedies, from Burundi (civil war) to Bangladesh (floods), and from Jamaica (hurricane) to all of North Africa (locusts). A small agency—it has a full-time staff of only twenty-one—OFDA has been headed since 1986 by Julia Taft, who has the kind of determination and energy that gets things done, often making cautious bureaucrats uncomfortable. "She starts a lot of fires," one AID official said, "but sometimes you have to follow her with a hose." It helps that her husband is William Howard Taft IV, the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

OFDA had been monitoring the famine in the Sudan for several months and growing increasingly concerned. In early September, Mrs. Taft's attitude was "We can't wait any longer to figure out the nuances of the multinational donors." She added, in an interview in November, "We were getting a little bit tired of the I.C.R.C. negotiations. I kept saying, 'O.K., folks, tomorrow's the deadline.' "

Then, during September, three things happened that made it possible for OFDA to move. First, Hunter Farnham, an official in AID's African bureau, circulated an article from *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, the journal of a research-and-advocacy group in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which concentrates on what it considers threatened indigenous cultures. The article, titled "Sudan's Secret Slaughter," was a report of the torture, mayhem, and murder committed against the Dinka in Wau by the government-armed militia and the Army. "It was staggering," Julia Taft says. "It set a very strong foundation for knowing that we needed to accelerate our efforts."

Then Washington received from the American Embassy in Khartoum a cable including a letter that had been written in August by Father Gottardi Silvano, a sixty-year-old parish priest in Abyei, to Mark Cunningham, of Concern. In the letter Father Silvano thanked Cunningham for delivering food to Abyei in June, before the rainy season, but noted that the operation had been calculated to help from ten to fifteen thousand people, while the number of refugees in Abyei had grown to thirty or forty thousand. "Due to the malnutrition . . . the death toll has increased up to 45 a day," Father Silvano wrote, and he added that most of the victims were children or old people.

"I took that letter up and showed it to everybody I thought needed to see it—and I waited while they read it," Mrs. Taft told me in November. She summarized the reaction: "Enough is enough; this is an outrage on human-

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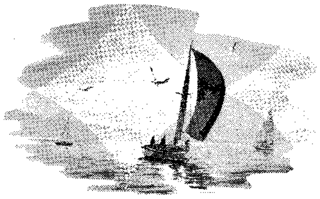

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ity. We cannot let this happen a day longer," and then said, "Everybody here who saw it felt as I did that something had to be done. That's when we began calling the mission"—the Embassy in Khartoum—"and saying, 'We're coming.' "

An OFDA team was not requested by the Embassy, and was resisted by the African-affairs officials at the State Department. It wasn't just that the diplomats in Khartoum and Washington were sensitive to the Sudanese government. It was also that they were afflicted with a sense of fatalism. Officials at State and AID didn't think that the government of the Sudan would allow OFDA to accomplish anything substantial. And the diplomats in Khartoum didn't like the idea of outsiders coming in to do their job. The Embassy's attitude, according to a non-American diplomat who had close contact with the Embassy, was "Who are these guys who think they can do what we haven't been able to do for a year?"

And then, in late September, the American Embassy in Khartoum provided OFDA with an opening, and OFDA took it. The Embassy proposed spending three million dollars before the end of the fiscal year—a million for flood relief, a million for combatting the locusts, and a million for the refugees from the famine. While OFDA was willing to spend the money, it wanted to send its own team to the Sudan. The *Cultural Survival* article and Father Silvano's letter had overcome the resistance at State, and Mrs. Taft made sure that she had the support of Secretary of State George Shultz: she had a videotape of pieces about the Sudan famine that had been broadcast on the NBC Nightly News and "The Today Show," and through her friend Charles Redman, the State Department spokesman, she took the video to Shultz. "He was appalled," says Mrs. Taft, who was with Shultz when he viewed the tapes. "You can hear about it, you can read memos, you can talk to people about it," she said of the famine, "but when you see it, it really has an impact."

The OFDA team arrived in Khartoum on September 28th. And it did accomplish what the Embassy had not been able to do. "It came in from the outside, it had money for airlifts, and its people stamped their feet hard," an American diplomat said, explaining OFDA's success. The OFDA team was headed by Joseph Gettier, who had been a Peace Corps volunteer in the nineteen-sixties and then a high-school teacher in northeast Washington, one of the District's poorer sections, before joining the State Department. In 1969, he went to Vietnam and worked in civil programs in a rural district; when Saigon fell, in 1975, he stayed behind to help evacuate Vietnamese who had been working with the Americans. In Khartoum, Gettier declined to be interviewed, saying through Gerry Lipson, an AID press officer who was there in October, that whatever success he had had was due to two things—"anonymity and humility."

Gettier had been alerted to the horrors in Abyei by Charles La Munière, who in August had come to assess the situation in the Sudan for the U.N. Gettier went to Abyei and spent the night of October 9th there (he was attacked so viciously by mosquitoes that his arms and face were swollen when he returned to Khartoum), and within a week the United States had begun an airlift of food.

Why hadn't something been done sooner, before so many children died of measles and malnutrition? Diplomats, U.N. officials, and relief workers had answers. The town was cut off by rains, they said. Even so, it could have been reached. "There's nothing impossible," said Nils Enqvist, when I asked him if it would have been possible to deliver food to Abyei by road. Enqvist, who is currently with the U.N.'s World Food Program office in Nairobi, has been involved in emergency relief operations for twenty years, and was praised for his work during the Ethiopian famine. "Weather and road conditions would never stop me from getting food there," Enqvist told me. "If we can afford airlifts, we can afford to bring in the right trucks and other equipment." His remarks raised the question of why there had not been an airlift sooner. The consistent answer from Western diplomats and U.N. officials was, in effect, "We didn't know there was an airstrip." I accepted this until one day when, in a Khartoum bookstore, I bought a map, published in 1980, for the equivalent of five dollars, and noticed on it a symbol for an airstrip at Abyei. Shortly afterward, a pilot told me that it had been known for a long time that there was an airstrip at Abyei—that during the colonial period the British had put in airstrips all over the country. Yet until La Munière and Gettier arrived no one—not the American Embassy, not any of the U.N. agencies, not the European Community—had sent an investigator to Abyei to look into the matter of the airstrip. A senior American relief worker said, "You have to come to the conclusion that people weren't looking at this very hard, either because they thought it was a lost cause"—that is, they felt that the government wouldn't allow the donors to do anything—"or because they didn't want to stir up the government."

There proved to be still another way to get food to Abyei—by donkey train. That is what Concern, the Irish humanitarian group working with refugees in Muglad, organized. Three hundred and forty-six donkeys, each loaded with a hundred and thirty-two pounds of grain, made the trek from Muglad to Abyei, a trip of a hundred and twenty miles, in October. At some points, men had to carry sacks of grain across swampy ground and then return for the donkeys. Concern paid five hundred Sudanese pounds for each donkey—about a hundred and twenty-five dollars at the official exchange rate. "It's a lot of money, an awful lot," Michael McDonagh, the administrator of Concern's refugee camp in Muglad, said, adding, "But it beats giving it to Nile Safaris." Nile Safaris is a charter-airline company in Khartoum, which provided the planes for the airlift to Abyei and for most of the other relief operations. Thanks to having been given a near-monopoly by the Sudanese government, and being willing to take some risks, it was able to and did extract high fees for its services. In addition to the donkey train, McDonagh later organized a truck convoy from Muglad to Abyei.

The money for the donkey train and the convoy was going to Arab tribesmen, not just to haul the food but to provide security as well. In addition, the chief of the Arab militia in the area was paid ten thousand Sudanese pounds, or twenty-five hundred dollars. It was, of course, the Arab militiamen who were preying on the Dinka, raping women and kidnapping children. "They're killers," McDonagh said of the Arab militia. "But if they're prepared to transport durra I'll take them." McDonagh, who was on leave from a job in the Irish Ministry of Health (the Irish government allows employees to take unpaid leave to work in underdevel-

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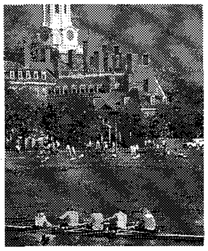

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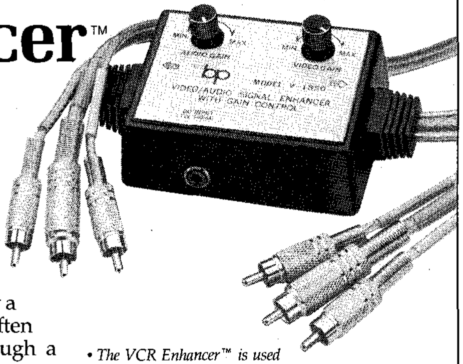

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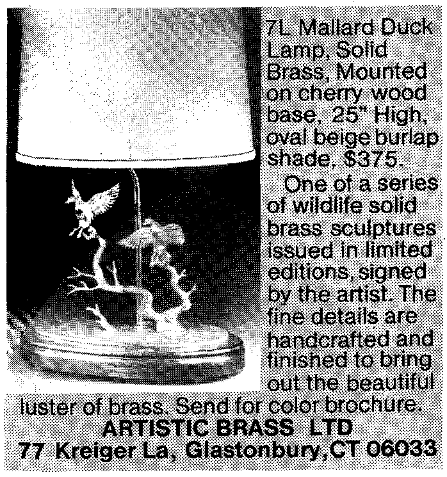

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oped countries), also managed to make the local military commanders his allies instead of his enemies.

THE airlift to Abyei was the notable American accomplishment. But Abyei, as one United Nations official put it, was a "sideshow." Even people involved with the American airlift admitted that, as one said, "it let a lot of people off the hook"—chiefly the Sudanese and American governments. It looked to the world as if the starving of the Sudan were being taken care of. But Abyei was by no means the worst place. The situation was the most dire in the war-torn southern regions, and that was where the need was the greatest. "It is no exaggeration to say that the southern Sudan is one of the worst-off places in the world today," Nils Enqvist told me in November. "One hundred thousand—maybe two hundred thousand—are at risk of death."

On September 28th, Paride Taban, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Torit, in the southern region of Equatoria, sent a desperate plea by radio to Sudanaid, the relief wing of the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Khartoum. Bishop Paride reported that hundreds of civilians fleeing the war had arrived in Torit "hungry, naked, and sick." He continued:

> This war in the south has become a fratricidal war. We can only compare it to the atomic bomb thrown in Japan or the Vietnam War. Both sides claim to be defending the life and rights of the civilians, but we see that the very civilians they fight for are the victims. Where will our people run to? For wherever they run in the south their imminent death is waiting for them. Their only chance remains to run to God. What we tell our people is: Prepare your souls for a good death.

A few days later, Bishop Paride sent another radio message. Torit was full of refugees, malnourished children, starving and sick people. There was no food left. There were no goods in the shops. No one could escape. Anti-personnel mines were everywhere. The Bishop asked for prayers, and appealed to world bodies to bring pressure on those involved in the conflict to negotiate a peace, so as to avoid further loss of life.

At about that time, OFDA was proposing an airlift to Aweil, which had not been supplied with relief food since March and in which eight thousand refugees had died between June and September. Rather than act decisively to save lives, the United States presented the proposal to the Sudanese government—and waited for an answer that never came. By mid-October, at least sixty people a day were dying in Aweil. OFDA also made another proposal for resupplying Aweil: have the Sudanese Air Force fly food to Aweil in a Buffalo, a cargo plane that needs only a relatively short landing strip. The military never said no, but it never said yes, either, and the United States didn't push. Politics and diplomacy were again taking precedence.

On November 1st, the I.C.R.C. finally received permission from the Sudanese government to carry out its survey in Akon, and that meant that once the survey was completed the I.C.R.C. could at last begin delivering relief. I was in the I.C.R.C. office the morning the word from the government arrived, talking with Pierre Pont, the head of the delegation in Khartoum. He looked tired, and he was discouraged. "I can't say I'm very optimistic," he said. "I've lived five months with ups and downs, hope and despair. Three, four months ago, the donors were convinced that the only way was through us, but now, after five, six months when nothing has moved, it's time to create other initiatives. We don't feel that other initiatives are interfering with our plan." Yet that same day the American Embassy, on hearing that the Sudanese government had given permission for the Akon survey, said that it would not push for an airlift to Aweil, lest it interfere with the I.C.R.C. negotiations.

Last year, UNICEF tried to assist the needy in the south as well as in the north. It gave some ninety tons of Unimix—a mixture of sugar, flour, and powdered milk—and blankets, pots, and medicines to Norwegian People's Aid, which is affiliated with Norway's Federation of Trade Unions and receives funding from the Norwegian government and private organizations, primarily European churches, for its work in the southern Sudan. Norwegian People's Aid airlifted relief to S.P.L.A. towns. UNICEF also covered some of the costs of air transportation and provided medicines for M.S.F.-Holland, which was working in the S.P.L.A. village of Ler. In September, Sadiq al-Mahdi confronted Cole Dodge, UNICEF's director in Khartoum, and told him, in effect, "We know all about your clandestine operation in the south; it is a breach of our sovereignty; your food is killing our soldiers." Sadiq made it clear that he expected UNICEF to cease its activities in the south, and that if it didn't all United Nations organizations in the Sudan might be expelled. To reinforce the message, the Sudanese Foreign Minister, who was in New York for a meeting of the General Assembly, repeated it to James P. Grant, the head of UNICEF. UNICEF ceased its assistance to the humanitarian groups working in the south. Having won that victory, the Sudanese government pushed for another, and won it, too. It wanted Cole Dodge out. Dodge worked for five years as UNICEF's representative in Uganda before he came to Khartoum, in August of 1986. In January of this year, because of the pressure from the government, he left the Sudan. Dodge departed quietly, and, as with Winston Prattley's departure two years earlier, there was no international outcry, no diplomatic protest.

In October, the World Food Program, later assisted by Catholic Relief Services, began an airlift of food to Juba, which had been largely cut off because of actions by the S.P.L.A. and government soldiers. The operation provided food, some of it donated by AID, for a hundred and fifty thousand residents and fifty thousand refugees. Several journalists went to Juba, and the resulting stories again left the impression that the starving in the Sudan were being cared for. But the rest of the southern Sudan was still in desperate need.

Most of the relief for the S.P.L.A.-controlled areas in the south has been provided by Norwegian People's Aid. From its base in Nairobi, this organization has delivered thirty-five hundred tons of food overland by truck to the S.P.L.A.-controlled town of Narus, and it has airlifted thirty million tons of medical supplies in dozens of cross-border flights, originating in Nairobi, to the S.P.L.A. towns of Pibor and Kapoeta.

ON January 24th, the New York *Times* reported that the American government would begin providing food to organizations that would deliver it to areas of the southern Sudan controlled by the S.P.L.A. The American Embassy in Khartoum had opposed the plan, and, indeed, had actually presented the proposal to the Sudanese government for its approval, and the government had said no. That the United States was going ahead with the plan reflected increasing frustration with the government of Sadiq al-Mahdi. Further reflecting a change in the American attitude was a comment by a senior diplomat in Washington. "I don't like saying this about a democracy, but we wouldn't mind seeing a coup," he said. Having been so solicitous of Sadiq al-Mahdi for so long, the United States was now going to the other extreme.

—RAYMOND BONNER

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A potter fragile as porcelain is reading this,
fragile and cool as shatter gone back to slip.

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someone who has to start from scratch is starting in.

Bright with blue paint and unlikely lines,
a wet gray shell holds still for a new brush.

The potter tries another color and another touch.
A marsh bird builds among rushes, to that design.

A potter breakable as china is firing clay:
the kiln is white with heat, the surface waves

with heat; the blue and thin-white glaze
is cool as water. Who holds the vase?

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# BOOKS

## *"A Wounded Man Falling Towards Me"*

IN 1970, a year after the intensification of hostilities in Northern Ireland, the Irish poet Seamus Heaney had a dream:

> I was shaving at the mirror of the bathroom when I glimpsed in the mirror a wounded man falling towards me with his bloodied hands lifted to tear at me or to implore.

Once the necessary narcissism of the youthful art-mirror was invaded by an ambiguous national—even familial—horror, Heaney's work began to exhibit an anxiety that has never left it, in spite of his move, in 1972, from Ulster to the Republic. His new collection of essays, "The Government of the Tongue" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $17.95), opens with an allegorical primer of this anxiety:

> Both Art and Life have had a hand in the formation of any poet, and both are to be loved, honoured and obeyed. Yet both are often perceived to be in conflict.

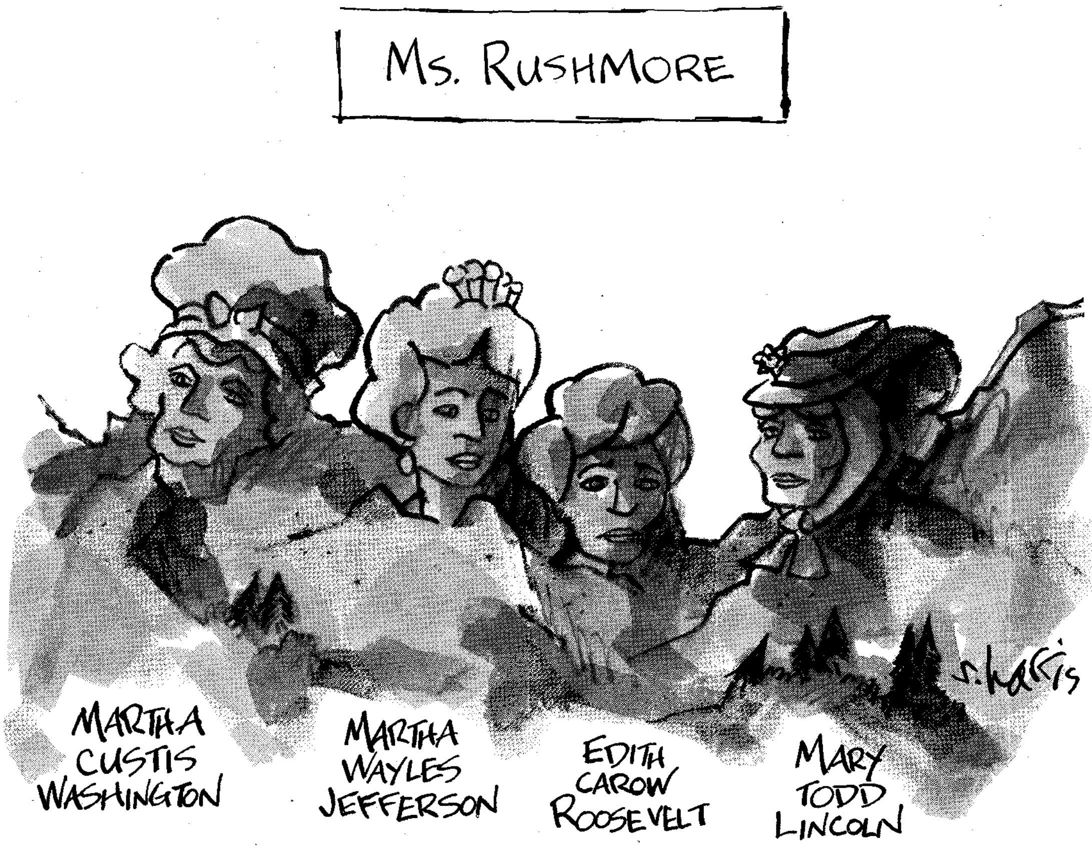
The first half of this new book belongs chiefly to Life. Several of its essays praise modern poets who have been called upon to exhibit exceptional moral courage under totalitarian regimes (Mandelstam, Holub, Herbert). Other essays hold up for inspection post-colonial poets such as Kavanagh and Walcott. (There is also a brilliant essay on Larkin's visionary moments; it springs from Heaney's interest in the assertion of value in the absence of any proof of the existence of such value—a question not unrelated to resistance to state control.)

The second half of "The Government of the Tongue"—four essays delivered in 1986 as the T. S. Eliot Memorial Lectures at the University of Kent—belongs chiefly to Art. Writing on Auden, Lowell, and Plath, Heaney pays homage (not without criticism) to three contemporary poets of the English language who were, to his mind, exemplary in their aesthetic practice. Heaney does not pretend to solve the dilemma put to the poet in every era by the demands of life and of art, and at least two of the examples he cites (George Herbert and Sylvia Plath) seem to me less than adequately represented for the purposes of his argument. But to follow the darts and feints of Heaney's mind as he worries his own case through these surrogates is immensely instructive.

In his first collection of essays, "Preoccupations" (1980), Heaney was engaged in coming to terms with some of his early masters—Wordsworth, Hopkins, and Yeats. He went to school to them to learn ways, both conceptual and linguistic, of treating his original givens—rural life, Catholicism, Irish nationality. His essays on his predecessors—bravura pieces of characterization, the best in recent memory—ended up defending a Wordsworthian and Keatsian "wise passiveness" (absorptive, hidden, receptive, yielding) against the Hopkinsian and Yeatsian tendency to force-march language into compliance with an authorial will.

The Irish troubles, however, put pliability and privacy into question as literary values. When Heaney was subjected to considerable pressure at home to take a public stand, he responded by anthropologizing the Irish conflict. In his incomparable volume "North" (1975) he published poems referring to centuries of tribal warfare in a whole swath of northern countries, from Scandinavia to Ireland, and the long-preserved violence of historical memory took on symbolic form in poems about slaughtered bodies exhumed from the bogs of Jutland and Ireland alike. The long view was a countermeasure to those whose memories went back only to the plantation of Ulster.

Heaney may have been drawn to a poet like Zbigniew Herbert by Herbert's comparable historical allusions to totalitarianism in Roman times. All writers under political pressure find historical allusion and allegory congenial forms, since they are oblique and non-referential in any legal sense. One solution to censorship—one that Herbert and Holub have adopted in Eastern Europe—is to write in parable, and Heaney himself has written in parables in his



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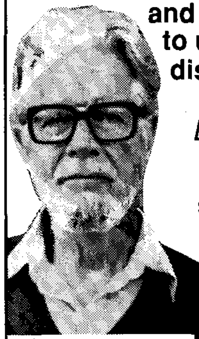
most recent volume of poems, "The Haw Lantern." Nonetheless, this solution—though interesting and fruitful stylistically—does not entirely satisfy Heaney as an answer to his central question: "What must the poet do in a politically troubled time?" It smacks too much of the political address.

Heaney's title—"The Government of the Tongue"—has, as he says, two meanings. In Heaney's first meaning, the writer's tongue takes governance over the world by exercising its transcriptive power and by its conferral of value. In Heaney's second meaning, the political world, perturbed by descriptions of itself not to its liking, attempts—by pressures ranging from censure to execution—to govern the tongue of the poet. And the poet's spirit, if it yields up its inner freedom, can engage in self-censorship and a disabling self-governing. In writing about these matters Heaney explicitly disavows comparison of his own free position with that of poets writing under totalitarian regimes, but he makes it clear that open speech is rarely welcome in any divided community.

Heaney's critics in Ireland have come from many sides. He has been accused of cowardice (being insufficiently political) and of propaganda (being too political), of complicity in violence (by seeing sectarian murder as endemic in the North since the Vikings), and of complicity in the status quo (by refusing to lend his voice to sectarian politics). He has accused himself (in "Exposure") of evasion of responsibility and (in "Station Island") of prettifying assassination with the absolution of verse.

What attracts Heaney to poets like Holub and Herbert (and Milosz) is their success in dealing with a relatively intractable subject matter. The poets of Eastern Europe have proved that even the most volatile social concerns can, and must, be brought under the government of the tongue if they are to be represented at all. At the same time, and at a deeper level, Heaney wonders whether, in order for the poet to act politically, it is necessary for him to represent history in poetry. Here his mentor is Mandelstam, who, after five years during which he was unable to compose, discovered for himself that writing about anything at all—provided one writes as a free man uncoerced by political prudence—is itself a rebuke to the totalitarian attempt to



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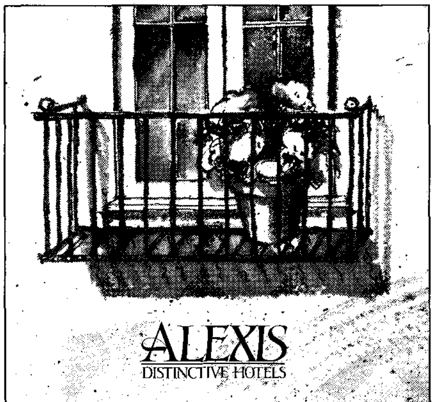
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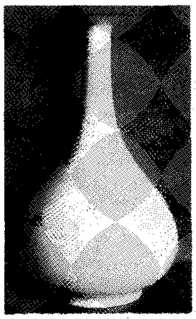
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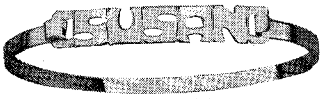

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govern the writer's tongue, to direct writing toward certain approved subjects. In writing on Mandelstam, Heaney speaks out for the unlimited freedom of lyric to take up private subjects as well as public ones, as long as it does so without respect to social pressure.

Human fearfulness under the threat of social disapproval—not to speak of the threat of punishment or death—assures the conformity of most writers to the will of the totalitarian state. Those who have resisted coöptation have been enrolled in what Heaney calls "a modern martyrology" of art. Though he equally admires, in a moral sense, non-poets who resist immoral state pressure, what he values in the poets who resist is their preservation of "cultural memory" (so that authentic poetry does not cease to exist), their "indicative mood" of bold presentation, and the "fate and scope" of their wide social concern. Contemporary Western lyric poetry, by contrast, can seem confined within private walls and damned to the conditional mood of wish, yearning, and indeterminacy. It seems afraid to take on the question of the collective social fabric.

The central question, which Heaney does not sufficiently address with respect to collective ideology and art, is whether some artists at all times and all artists at some times can work happily within a civic or ecclesiastical ideological consensus. The numerous Madonnas and Masses of supreme aesthetic quality suggest that "living" ideologies, as long as they are believed in, are not so aesthetically oppressive as dead (totally codified, governmentally imposed) ones. The view of the artist as a living critique of ideological consensus is, of course, an attractive one to us, post-romantics as we are, and can perhaps be applied retrospectively even to some Renaissance artists working within an ideology like Christianity, where Heaney sees only "acceptable themes . . . given variously resourceful treatments." To me it seems that a critique of received forms of religious expression is visible, for instance, in the work of George Herbert, whom Heaney prefers to regard as one who "surrendered himself to a framework of belief and an instituted religion; but in [Herbert's] case, it happened that his personality was structured in such a way that he could dwell in amity with doctrine." Amity and surrender are not

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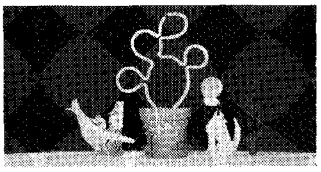
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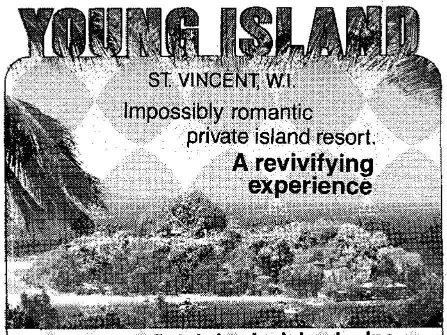

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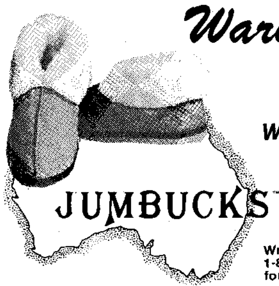

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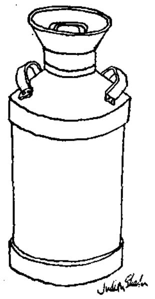
the marks of any strenuous art; and Herbert deserves better praise than the "felicity or correctness of a work's execution" which is all that Heaney allows the Renaissance poet working within the Christian consensus. We need a better theory of what it means to an artist to struggle with an ideology from within, as a believer.

In treating the Eastern European poets, Heaney necessarily works from translations. When he turns, in the second part of "The Government of the Tongue," to modern poets writing in English whom he admires, a palpable change of emphasis, from society to self, appears in his pages. Imaginative arts such as poetry, Heaney concedes, are "practically useless," but he adds, "They verify our singularity, they strike and stake out the ore of self which lies at the base of every individuated life." Here it is the transcription not of the social fabric but of the private self—and a special sort of self, the "individuated life"—that is at stake. Knowingly or not, Heaney in this vocabulary breaks definitively with most of the literary theory that is interested in the social function of literature. Such theory refuses precedence to the "imaginative arts" (as Heaney calls them) of language, and puts writing that exhibits poesis on the same footing as all other "texts." This move, which is a political one, wishes to allocate to all texts equal cultural interest. Of course, this sociological view of writing allows no particular privilege to what Heaney calls "singularity" and to the "individuated life"—those qualities indispensable (but not sufficient) for identifiable literary style.



There have been singular and individuated selves who never wrote a word. But without a singular and individuated moral self there has never been a singular and individuated literary style. The writing self does not have to be virtuous in the ordinary sense of the word; but it does have to be extraordinarily virtuous in its aesthetic moves. It must refuse—against the claims of fatigue, charm, popularity, money, and so on—the *idée reçue*, the imprecise word, the tired rhythm, the replication of past effects, the uninvestigated stanza. It is this heroic virtue in the realm of aesthetic endeavor that courses in great authors exist to teach (as courses in "texts" do not). And Heaney stands by this aesthetic arduousness, which he finds in each of his authors. Human testimony—from the poor, the uneducated, the prudishly conventional, the genteelly euphemistic, the propaganda hacks, the well-meaning sincere—is not uninteresting. It *is* interesting. But it does not convey the morality of the imaginative effort toward aesthetic embodiment. That morality is almost unimaginably exhausting.

In pointing out Lowell's deliberate breaking of his own style not once but twice, Plath's sedulous youthful work on poetic form, and Auden's pursuit of the Anglo-Saxon underpinnings of English, Heaney pays tribute to the sheer toil toward competence, on the one hand, and toward freshness, on the other, that is the indispensable preparatory work for poetry. The fact that Auden and Lowell and Plath all came from a privileged elite is not for Heaney an issue; it is axiomatic for him that privilege, somehow acquired, is necessary to becoming an accomplished artist. He does not confuse the political work of a just society (insuring that talent has access to training) with aesthetic judgment (which can only say whether or not a writer has successfully deployed the moral, imaginative, and linguistic resources needed for the art work in hand). Nor is Heaney diffident about the ranking of aesthetic efforts. He understands what his chosen writers are up to, can see where and how they succeed, and is entirely willing to demonstrate and defend what he sees. Practical criticism consists in just that evidential demonstration, but it is rarely had from one who knows the medium and its potential glories and pitfalls as well as Heaney.

In Heaney's Auden essay we catch a deflected glimpse of his own aims as a writer of prose. There he praises the critical "responses and formulations" of the poet Geoffrey Grigson as the sort that "count for most in the long poetic run, because they are the most intrinsically sensitive to the art of language." Some Auden critics, he remarks, have concentrated on the history of ideas, whether in commenting on Auden's "shifting allegiances to Marx and Freud" or, more recently, in finding Auden's texts metaphysically self-deconstructive. "It may be,"

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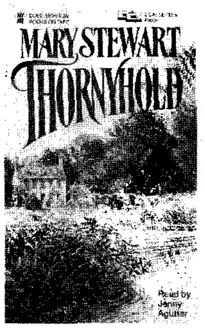

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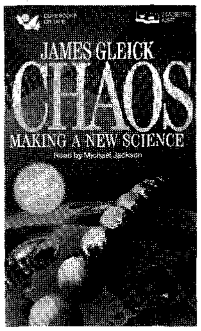

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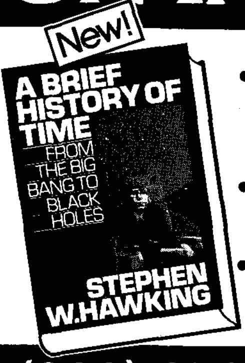

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Heaney continues, "that Grigson's way of talking about poems is not as strictly analytical as this, but the way it teases out the cultural implications and attachments which inhabit any poem's field of force is a critical activity not to be superseded, because it is so closely allied, as an act of reading, to what happens during the poet's act of writing." The art of Heaney's criticism is never to lose touch with the writing act, the texture of the lines on the page. And his next sentence is one that, revealingly enough, would never be uttered by a historian of ideas or a deconstructive critic: "A new rhythm, after all, is a new life given to the world, a resuscitation not just of the ear but of the springs of being." That sentence leads him into a splendid and energetic glance at the early Auden.

In canonizing an English Anglican, an American Brahmin, and a female expatriate American, Heaney stands aside from the depressing literary politics in which Marxists puff only Marxists, women puff only women, blacks puff only blacks, and so on, with a consequent loss of credibility for the whole enterprise of literary judgment. Of course, the fraternity of artists has its familial bonds, and Heaney has not hesitated to praise, with generational solidarity, admirable work by other Irish artists and other post-colonial writers. But he has reserved his extended and investigative critical writing for major writers, and in them he observes, with an insight impossible to anyone but a poet, their subtlest as well as their broadest powers. Space allows me only one brief example: Heaney's remarks about the way Lowell ends poems. He quotes a sample of last lines, and goes on:

> Closing lines like these would tremble *in the centre of the ear like an arrow in a* target and set the waves of suggestion rippling. A sense of something utterly completed vied with a sense of something startled into scope and freedom. The reader was permitted the sensation of a whole meaning simultaneously clicking shut and breaking open, a momentary illusion that the fulfilments which were being experienced *in* the ear spelled out meanings and fulfilments available in the world. So, no matter how much the poem insisted on breakdown or the evacuation of meaning from experience, its fall toward a valueless limbo was broken by the perfectly stretched safety net of poetic form itself.

Heaney's adverse criticism of his three poets—always courteous, but not the less incisive for that—suggests values that he is too sophisticated to prescribe but is nonetheless disappointed not to find in them. He regrets that Auden forsook his original wildness of language: in later Auden "the line is doctrinaire in its domesticity, wanting to comfort like a thread of wool rather than shock like a bare wire." Lowell in the late sonnet trilogy massed his shock troops too oppressively for a human scale: "To confront the whole triptych is to confront a phalanx. I feel driven off the field of my reader's freedom by the massive riveted façade, the armoured tread, the unconceding density of it all." Plath, instead of enlarging herself into myth, reduces powerful ancient myths to the confines of her own personal history: "In 'Lady Lazarus' . . . the cultural resonance of the original story is harnessed to a vehemently self-justifying purpose, so that the supra-personal dimensions of knowledge—to which myth typically gives access—are slighted in favour of the intense personal need of the poet." One may not always agree with Heaney, but one is moved to profitable thought by his metaphorically vivid judgments.

Heaney's volume tosses and turns between "the hedonism and jubilation" of the poetic act and the affront to human misery presented by that hedonism. In the most original moment of this very original book, Heaney finds a way into the space between creative hedonism and human suffering. He quotes the Gospel of John, in which the scribes and Pharisees bringing before Jesus a woman taken in adultery ask whether they should obey the Mosaic law and stone her:

> This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.
>
> So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.
>
> And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.
>
> And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.
>
> When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?
>
> She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

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Heaney finds here an allegory for poetry:

> The drawing of those characters is like poetry, a break with the usual life but not an absconding from it. Poetry, like the writing, is arbitrary and marks time in every possible sense of that phrase. It does not say to the accusing crowd or to the helpless accused, "Now a solution will take place," it does not propose to be instrumental or effective. Instead, in the rift between what is going to happen and whatever we would wish to happen, poetry holds attention for a space, functions not as distraction but as pure concentration, a focus where our power to concentrate is concentrated back on ourselves.
>
> This is what gives poetry its governing power.

This remarkable exegesis of Jesus' mysterious and uninterpreted writing finds a way to place art where it must be situated in order to be correctly judged—within human action but at least partially disengaged from direct dispute with it. Propaganda and political action enter the dispute confrontationally. Poetry exists within it, marking (as one of the poet's many invoked senses would have it) the epoch, taking its measure. Heaney comments that when Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam died, "nothing died with them." They still mark their time.

The writing about poetry done by a poet like Heaney is done out of need—the need to find ways to create a work and a life that are as yet only imagined. There is a later, colder writing concerning poets, done by others after their death, in which their moral choices and their relation to the politics of their age take on a historical interest rather than an existential urgency. At that moment, the values of the second half of this volume come into decisive dominance: Did the poet find an individuated language for a morally individuated self? During the poet's lifetime, however, the thousand daily choices of what is said and done in the moral life (actively and broadly conceived) exert a compulsion at least equal to that of language. The two halves of this volume—the first more responsible to the lived life, the second more responsible to the morality of style—declare that (as for Wallace Stevens) "It was not a choice/ Between, but of." Heaney's recent powerful volumes of verse, "Station Island" and "The Haw Lantern," when they are read in the light of these essays, can be seen to exhibit in terse and symbolic form the poetic strategies Heaney has been finding to mark the time of his time. —HELEN VENDLER

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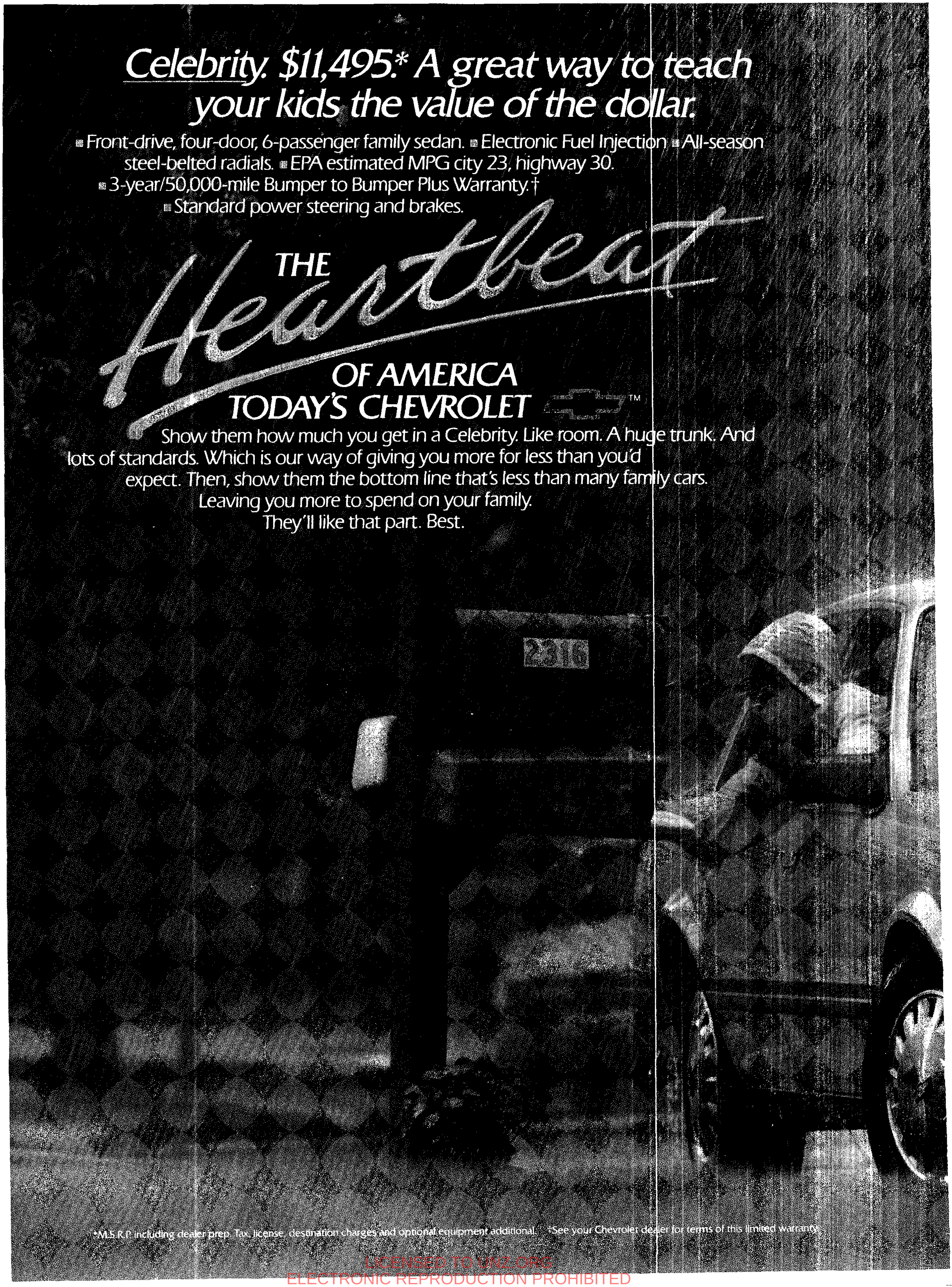

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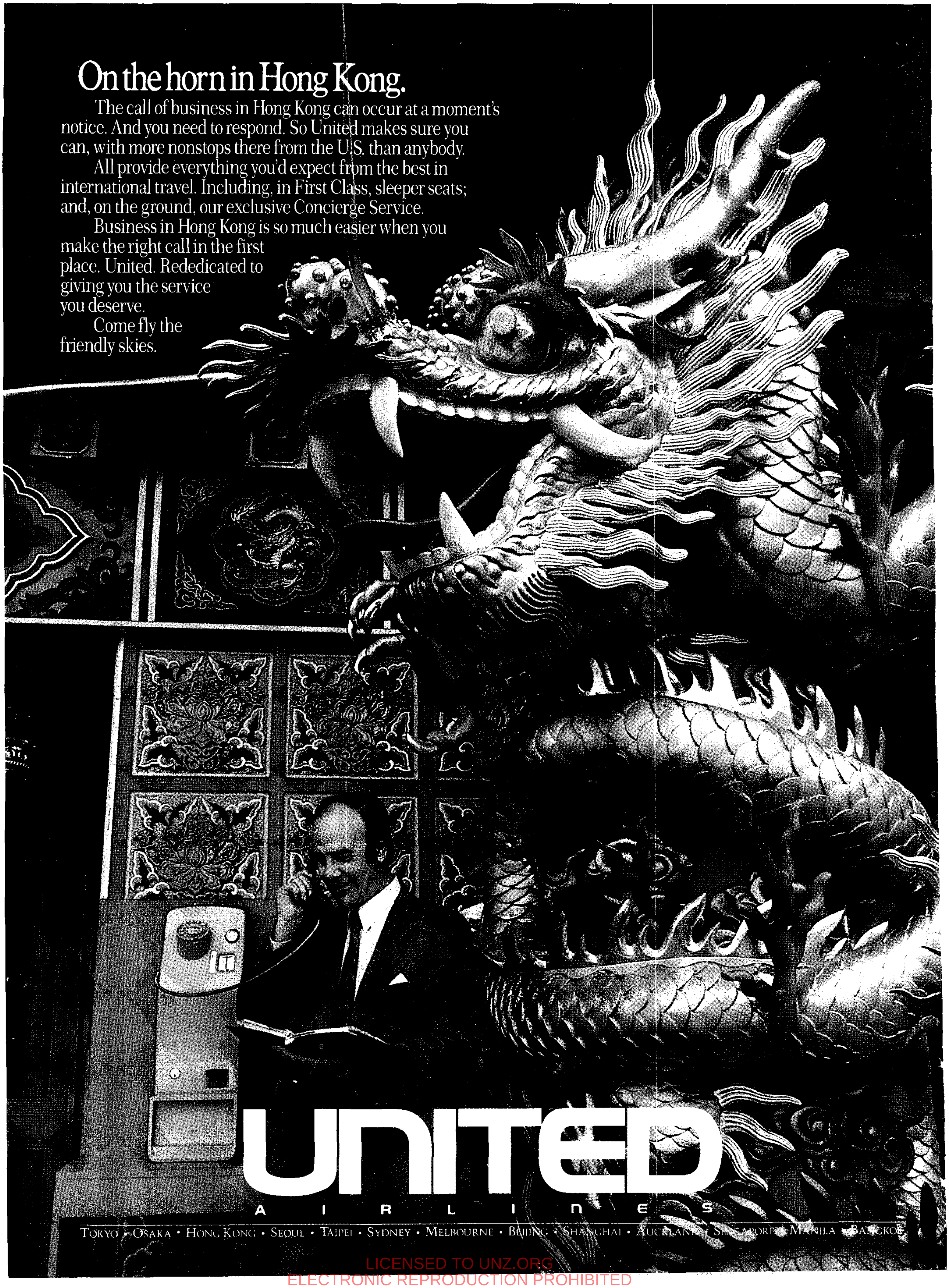

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